CHICAGO'S FIRST MAYOR.

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W. B. Ogden

FERGUS' HISTORICAL SERIES, No. 17.

WILLIAM B. OGDEN;

AND

EARLY DAYS IN CHICAGO:

A PAPER

READ BEFORE THE CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1881.

(ON THE PRESENTATION BY MRS. OGDEN OF A PORTRAIT OF HER LATE HUSBAND, PAINTED BY GEO. P. A. HEALY.)

BY

HON. ISAAC N. ARNOLD,

PRESIDENT OF THE CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AND HONORARY FELLOW OF THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, LONDON.

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CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THE Hall of the Chicago Historical Society was filled by prominent citizens and old settlers to witness the proceedings on the presentation of the portrait of William B. Ogden.

On the platform were the Hon. Elihu B. Washburne, Judge Thomas Drummond, ex-Chief-Justice John Dean Caton; and on the right were the ex-Mayors of Chicago, B. W. Raymond, Isaac L. Milliken, John C. Haines, Julien S. Rumsey, Roswell B. Mason, Joseph Medill, and Thomas Hoyne, and many old settlers of Chicago.

Edwin H. Sheldon, Esq., on behalf of Mrs. Ogden, said:

"MR. PRESIDENT:—The Chicago Historical Society, some months since, passed a resolution, requesting Mrs. Ogden, the widow of the late William B. Ogden, to give to the Society a portrait of her late husband, who had been one of its founders, and always, during his life, a liberal benefactor. The resolution referred to Mr. Ogden, in appropriate terms, as one of the founders of the City, and as one who had projected and largely aided the execution of many great enterprises, the benefits of which the people of Chicago, and the North-West, are reaping in such full measure today.

"It is the special duty of this Society to preserve the history and faces of those who have conspicuously aided in developing and building up this great Western Empire, and in this spirit the resolution referred to was passed.

"Mrs. Ogden very generously gave the commission for the desired picture to Mr. George P. A. Healy, an artist of high repute in the art-centres of the world, who for a generation had been a personal friend of Mr. Ogden, and to whose pencil the Society, in years gone by, had been indebted for many valuable contributions to its collections. The picture before us is the result of that commission. Mr. Healy had painted Mr. Ogden from life a number of times; but, of all these pictures, only one survived the

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disastrous fire of 1871. The present portrait is painted from a photograph taken some ten or twelve years ago, and is the best presentation we have of Mr. Ogden, as he appeared in his later years.

"In all that has been said and written of Mr. Ogden, his public spirit and enterprise have stood forth prominently. This is but a fair tribute to a noble trait, so useful in a new country. Although a man of large fortune, his spirit was not one of accumulation, but rather of development; and his improvements and active enterprises were always, not only fully up to, but often in advance of, his ready means. His fellow-citizens have done full justice to this feature of his character.

"But there is another trait, of which I feel impelled to speak—one not so well known, to which I wish briefly to allude. I lived under the same roof with Mr. Ogden for a quarter of a century, and for nearly all that time we carried on our house jointly, thus enforcing a very close and long-continued intimacy. These years brought to each of us, as they do to all, days of trial, of suffering, and of sorrow, and yet in all that time, looking back with careful scrutiny, I can not recall one harsh or unkind word received from him. His patience and forbearance were great; his friendship steadfast; and his good will unbounded. I speak strongly, perhaps; but only as I feel justified in doing, from an acquaintance of over forty years.

"I am charged with the pleasant duty of presenting this portrait, in behalf of Mrs. Ogden, to the Chicago Historical Society, in response to its resolution, which I now gladly do."

At the conclusion of Mr. Sheldon's remarks, Mr. Arnold said:

"On behalf of the Chicago Historical Society, I accept with grateful thanks this valuable present. Thanks are due to Mrs. Ogden, not only from the members of this Society, but also from the citizens at large, all of whom will be glad to see upon these walls the portrait of the first Mayor of the City."

Mr. Arnold then proceeded to read the address, which follows:

WILLIAM B. OGDEN;

AND

EARLY DAYS IN CHICAGO.

The most prominent figure, in the history of Chicago, from 1835 until his death in 1877, was William B. Ogden. For the first forty years of our existence as a City, he was our representative man. His active mind originated most, and aided largely, in the execution of nearly all our public improvements. He built, or caused to be, the first draw-bridge across the Chicago River. He laid out and opened many miles of streets in the north and the west divisions of the City; aided in digging the Illinois-and-Michigan Canal; advocated, with ability, laws necessary for its construction and enlargement; projected and built hundreds, nay, thousands of miles of the Railways which have built up Chicago; he had much to do with our water-supply, our sewerage and park systems, and, indeed, nearly all our great enterprises of public improvements. It is, therefore, peculiarly appropriate that his portrait should have an honored place on these walls; that his life and character and great public services should be recorded here; and here his history should be perpetuated. Besides, he has special claims on this Society, as one of its founders, one who liberally contributed to its support, and one who felt it an honor to preside over its deliberations.

He was born June 15th, 1805, at Walton, a town in the wild and mountainous county of Delaware, New York, and died August 3d, 1877, at his country-seat, Boscobel near High Bridge, on the Harlem. His father died while he was yet a lad, and, being the oldest son, he was early placed in a position of responsibility, as the head of a large

family, and very soon developed those qualities of executive ability, sagacity, and courage, good sense, energy, and determination which made him always a recognized leader among men, and caused his influence to be powerfully felt in this City and State, and throughout the North-West.

WILD ADVENTURES AS A LUMBERMAN ON THE DELAWARE. DEER-HUNTING.

His boyhood was passed in the picturesque valleys and among the hills of Delaware County, which were then covered with a dense and magnificent forest of sugar-maple, beech, birch, and elm, while the sides of the mountains were thickly clothed with pine and hemlock fir. Vast rafts of logs and lumber were, with the spring floods, sent down the Delaware to Philadelphia.

The raftsmen had rude and sometimes dangerous experiences in running the dams of the swollen river, and Mr. Ogden had many a tale of exciting adventure occurring in these rough days. But it was in hunting the deer among the hills on the Delaware, and on the Unadilla and other tributaries of the Susquehanna, which furnished the most exciting stories of the days of his youth. Clubs of hunters then existed in the Counties of Otsego, Chenango, and Delaware; packs of hounds were kept, and the hunters who gathered at the annual autumn hunts, coming often from forty to sixty miles, were as well mounted with horses of as good blood and equal endurance as the best English stock. Judges, lawyers, and gentlemen-farmers joined in the exciting sport, and among them all there was no keener sportsman, no more fearless rider than young Ogden. I have heard him repeat some doggerel verses describing these hunting parties, as nearly as I can recall the lines, something like the following:

"Chenang, Otsego, and Old Delaware invites
To join in the chase for six days and six nights."

THE MEET OF THE HUNTERS WAS THEN DESCRIBED.

"There is Throop ready mounted upon a fine black,
But a far fleeter gelding does Starkweather back.
Cox Morris' bay, full of metal and bone,
And gayly Skin Smith, on a dark-sorrel roan,

But the horse, of all horses that hunted that day,
Was Ogden's fleet charger, and that is a gray.
Their horses were all of the very best blood;
They'll make the snow fly, and they'll dash through the mud;
And for hounds, their merits with thousands they'll back,
Not Deveraux, Storrs, nor Livingston can show such a pack.
Forty stags are laid low, at forty rods how they fall!
Forty bucks are made venison, by the keen hunter's ball.
Forty saddles now smoke, on the plentiful board,
Forty corks are now drawn, from Bacchus' hoard;
Forty hunters' club wits—every man in his place.
Forty stories are told of the *Unadilla Chase.*"

I have often heard Mr. Ogden describe these hunts, and he said the music of the fox-hounds reverberating and echoing from hill to hill, now the lone cry of a single hound, and then swelling into the full chorus by the whole pack—with the wild speed of the horses, and the frequent crack of the rifle at the run-ways, was a scene of adventure and excitement never to be forgotten.*

Here he became familiar with wood-craft, and a very skilful shot with the rifle. Some of his feats would rival those of Cooper's Leatherstocking. I have heard of a

* Since this paper was read, the author has received a letter from an old school-mate and friend of Mr. Ogden, *Samuel North* of Unadilla, N. Y.; among other things he says: "Many of the incidents narrated by you, illustrating Ogden's manly characteristics, such as his exploits on the Delaware and as a daring hunter, were familiar to me. I remember an incident which occurred during one of those hunts which made him the wonder and hero of the occasion. A deer, hotly pursued, had taken refuge on an island in the Unadilla, which was unapproachable except across a deep and rapid current. No boats were at hand, but in one place, the island approached so near the mainland, that a large tree had been felled, and had served for a crossing to men of steady nerves and cool heads. Ogden, well mounted and riding at full speed, was the first to reach the bank. Knowing his horse, and his horse knowing him, he scarcely paused, but, encouraging his steed by a few words, the noble animal picked his way across the foaming torrent on the trunk of the tree, carrying his rider and a heavy rifle in safety to the land, and soon the crack of that rifle announced to the hunters, who came rushing up, the death of the game."

scene at a shooting-match in Delaware, very like that so graphically described in the "Pioneers," as occurring in the adjoining County of Otsego. A negro put up his live turkeys, as a mark, at one hundred yards, at a quarter of a dollar a shot. If the turkey was hit in the head, it belonged to the person shooting, but if hit anywhere else, it was still the negro's property. So certain was Ogden's aim, that the negro insisted on his paying double price for his shot. It was amusing to see the negro's antics as Ogden was about to fire. He would dance up in dangerous proximity to the turkey, shouting, "Gib a niggar fair play!" "Dodge, dodge, ole gobbler, Ogden is going to shoot." "Shake ye head, darn ye, don't ye see dat rifle pointing at ye?"

But it was rare that the old negro saved his turkey when Ogden held the rifle.

EDUCATION.

It was amidst such scenes and without the advantages of college-training that Ogden was educated. I recall an incident which illustrates his energy, and is characteristic. On one occasion, in conversation with a lady who, born to affluence, was reduced to poverty, and who was asking his advice how her inexperienced sons and daughter could earn a livelihood, to the question, "What *can* they do?" He replied, "If I was in the position of your sons, if I could do nothing better, I would hire myself out to dig potatoes with my fingers, and when I had earned enough to buy a hoe, I would dig with it, and so I would climb up."

"Madam," said he, "don't have the least concern. If your sons are healthy and willing to work, they will find enough to do, and if they can not begin at the top, let them begin at the bottom, and very likely they will be all the better for it."

He meant that persons obliged to earn their own livelihood must not be too fastidious, and that work, if ever so humble, was honorable. He was then a prosperous and wealthy man, and to encourage her, he said:

"I was born close by a saw-mill, was early left an orphan, was cradled in a sugar-trough, christened in a mill-pond, graduated at a log-school-house, and, at fourteen, fancied I could do any thing I turned my hand to, and that nothing was impossible, and ever since, madam, I have been trying to prove it, and with some success."

SPEECH AT ALBANY, 1835, ON THE ERIE RAILWAY BILL.

In 1834, Mr. Ogden had become a leading man in his native county, of great and deserved popularity, and was selected to represent Delaware in the New-York Legislature. Here, as a member of the Assembly, he became intimately acquainted with the able and distinguished men who, under the name of the "Albany Regency," so long controlled the politics of New York. Among these remarkable men were, Martin Van Buren, Silas Wright, William L. Marcy, Benjamin F. Butler, Azariah C. Flagg, Edwin Croswell, and John A. Dix. Mr. Charles Butler, a brother of Benjamin F. Butler, Attorney-General of the United States, under Jackson and Van Buren, married a sister of Mr. Ogden.

He was selected as the special advocate and champion of the New-York and Erie Railroad, then lately projected, and on the 20th, 21st, and 22d days of March, 1835, he made a very remarkable speech in favor of the road. It was reported in full in the *Albany Argus*, of those dates. He was then less then thirty years old, and the railway system, now grown to such wonderful proportions, was in its early inception.

It was a bold, sagacious, prophetic speech, and, as I lately read it, I was surprised at the wonderful foresight and ability of the speaker. He made a most earnest appeal to the state-pride of the Empire State to aid in the construction of the Erie road. "Otherwise," said he, "the sceptre will depart from Judah. The Empire State will no longer be New York." "Philadelphia," continued he, "is your great rival, and, if New York is idle, will gather in the trade of the great West." He alluded to Maryland's efforts in behalf of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and then looking to the future, he said, "Continuous railways from New York to Lake Erie, and south of Lake Erie, through Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, to the waters of the Mississippi, and connecting with railroads running to Cincinnati, and Louisville in Kentucky, and Nashville in Tennessee, and to New Orleans, will present the most splendid system of internal communication ever yet devised by man." He continued, "to look forward to the completion of such a system, in

my day, may be considered visionary," but he expressed "the hope that he should live to see it realized."

He did live to see all, and more than all, this "splendid system" realized. Not only roads from New York to the Mississippi, but continuing north to St. Paul and Lake Superior, and crossing the continent itself, to the shores of the Pacific. And I add, in language carefully considered, that he himself contributed to that consummation more than any other man, and it is not extravagant to say that Wm. B. Ogden did for the North-West what DeWitt Clinton did for New York.

COMES TO CHICAGO.

In 1835, Mr. Ogden became associated with a company of Eastern capitalists, who, under the name of the "American Land Company," were making very large investments at Chicago, and elsewhere in the West. At the instance of Charles Butler, who had large investments in Chicago, he removed to this City, to manage these large interests. Coming myself to Chicago in October, 1836, I formed the acquaintance of his brother, Mahlon D. Ogden, and in the spring of 1837, we became law partners, and for many years managed the legal business of this company, and also of the very large real-estate investments of the late Frederick and Arthur Bronson, of New York—all of which were in the immediate charge of William B. Ogden.

ST. JAMES' CHURCH.

The first time I ever saw Mr. Ogden was in the early spring of 1837, at St. James' Church. This was the pioneer Episcopal Parish in Chicago, and for it was built the first brick-church erected in this City. It stood near the s.w. corner of Cass and Illinois Streets. The Rev. Isaac W. Hallam was the rector. John H. Kinzie and J. W. C. Coffin were the wardens, and among the prominent members, in addition to the Kinzie family, were, William B. Ogden, Gurdon S. Hubbard, Eli B. Williams, John Rodgers, George W. Dole, General David Hunter, Dr. Phillip Maxwell, James B. Campbell, Alonzo Huntington, Hans Crocker, and others. Mrs. Mark Skinner and her sister, Mrs. Barstow, then the Misses Williams, with their cousin, Mrs. J. N. Balestier, then Miss Wolcott, the belles of the City,

led the choir, and I need not say the singing was good. After church, I was presented by Mahlon D. Ogden to his brother. As we waited for him to come out of church after service, it seemed that he had a kind word and friendly greeting for every man, woman, and child in the congregation. He was evidently a great favorite. He had lately arrived from the East, and every body stopped to shake hands with and welcome him home. The cordial manners of the early settlers, and the founders of St. James' would contrast favorably, I think, with the cold, reserved, and somewhat frigid manners of some of its members in these days. Those were the days of open-handed hospitality and friendship, and every one was willing and anxious to aid and help his neighbor. Mr. Ogden was, from the beginning, a most liberal member of the congregation.

HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

He wasat this time about thirty-one years of age. You might look the country through and not find a man of more manly and imposing presence, or a finer-looking gentleman. His forehead was broad and square; his mouth firm and determined; his eyes large dark gray; his nose large; hair brown; his complexion ruddy; his voice clear, musical, and sympathetic; his figure a little above the medium height, and he united great muscular power with almost perfect symmetry of form. He was a natural leader, and if he had been one of a thousand picked men cast upon a desolate island, he would, by common, universal, and instinctive selection, have been made their leader.

ANECDOTE OF DR. WILLIAM B. EGAN.

The church was built on lots donated, for that purpose, by John H. Kinzie. Indeed, St. James' in those early days was so associated with the Kinzie family that it was sometimes called the Kinzie Church. Above the very high and conspicuous mahogany pulpit, in the dim and religious light, were painted on the wall the letters I. H. S., not very unlike J. H. K.—the initials of J. H. Kinzie. Soon after the church was finished, Mrs. Kinzie invited the witty and genial, and not over reverent, Dr. William B. Egan to attend church. He accepted, and, after service, accompanied

Mrs. Kinzie home to dinner. On the way, she said, "Well, Doctor, how do you like our church?"

"Very much, indeed," he replied; "but is it not a little egotistical, and won't the people think it a little vain in John to put his initials so conspicuously over the pulpit?"

THE OLD LAKE-HOUSE.

Until the erection of his own beautiful residence on Ontario Street, Mr. Ogden lived at the old Lake-House. This was a large, brick structure, far in advance of the times, and would have been deemed a comfortable hotel even in these days of luxury and extravagance. It was built in 1835, and opened in 1836, situated on Rush Street and, running through from Michigan to Kinzie Street, it faced across the river, on the south, the neatly-kept and bright whitewashed stockade, pickets, and buildings of old Fort Dearborn. The river was spanned by a rope-ferry, and across it was this military post, with its grass-plot shaded by the old historic honey locust, and within the pickets stood the granite boulder, which tradition said "had been the Indian stone of sacrifice and death," and on which Daniel Webster, in 1837, stood, while the great orator mingled his words with the murmur of the waves of Lake Michigan. There from all parts of the ambitious little City could be seen, above the low, wooden buildings, the flag of the Fort, its bright and beautiful colors waving in the breeze.

How much more beautiful and romantic was Chicago then than now! The river, now choked with filth, and offensive alike to smell and sight, was then a clear, transparent, running stream, its grassy banks fringed with foliage and flowers. Toward the east, from the Lake House, there was nothing to hide the bright waters of the Lake, except the fine old cotton-wood, which had long shaded and sheltered the residence of the Kinzie family. The grounds of this old-Kinzie house, the home of the father of John H. Kinzie, sloped gently toward the river, and the banks were grassy, and the broad piazza was pleasantly shaded by four large Lombardy poplars.

The young ladies, in those days, were accustomed to the saddle, and horseback-riding was a common amusement. Virginia and New England, as well as the daughters of

some French and Indian families, furnished equestrians of great beauty, grace, skill, and fearlessness. There was a fine natural forest between Clark and Pine Streets, and north on the lake shore, and along its grsssy paths lay fallen and decaying trees. Over these, we practised our horses and Indian ponies in leaping. Our favorite steeds were Ogden's old Delaware parade-horse, "Paddy"; Garrett's "Eagle," a beautiful cream-colored animal, with black mane and tail; and Capt. Allen's splendid chestnut charger.

One day, Ogden and I were riding along the beach, on the lake shore, between Twelfth and Eighteenth Streets. Ogden was riding "Paddy," and I was mounted on "Eagle," when my horse on the edge of the water plunged into a bed of quicksand. Fortunately, one of his forefeet struck firm ground, and, with a tremendous spring, he reached *terra firma*, and saved me from the awful fate of the Master of Ravenswood, so graphically described by Sir Walter Scott.

Few now living can recall those gay scenes, but those who can, will not have forgotten the almost unequalled beauty of a daughter of Col. Whistler, nor those black-eyed, dark-haired Virginia girls, nor the belles of mixed French and Indian races, who united the grace and beauty of both; and I am quite certain that no one, who was so happy as to participate in these rides, will have forgotten that rosy-cheeked, golden-haired lass, the most fearless and graceful of all, whom the Indians in their admiration called,

"O-go-ne-qua-bo-qua,
The Wild Rose."

THE RACE TO DANVILLE.

In May, 1837, Mr. Ogden sent for me one day, saying he had a claim of $10,000 against a resident of Danville, in this State, who had just failed. He wished me to go there as soon as possible and try to secure it. He also advised me that Henry G. Hubbard, as one of the firm of Hubbard & Co., was also a large creditor, and that it was important that Hubbard should not know of my departure, for if Hubbard reached Danville first, the debtor would probably turn over all his property to secure the Hubbards, but if I could get to Danville first, and attach

the property of the debtor, the claim, very large in those days, might be secured. I was instructed to get my attachment writ, go to Nickols, who kept the best livery in Chicago, and get a famous gray saddle-horse, Nickols then had, of great speed and endurance, and beat Hubbard to Danville. There was not then any road to Danville, except a path called "The Hubbard Trail," which Gurdon S. and Henry G. Hubbard had made in taking goods from Chicago to that place, where for several years they had kept a trading-post. When the sun was an hour high, I had obtained my legal process, and the gray stood impatiently pawing before my office door, on Dearborn Street, between Lake and South-Water Streets. As I threw myself into the saddle, I said, "My gallant gray, you will be quiet enough before you get back."

I hoped to reach Rexford's tavern, at the Calumet, that night, and, if I could get away, and cross the Calumet and Kankakee swamps before Hubbard overtook me, I felt pretty sure I should beat him. Arriving at Rexford's, I saw that special care was taken of my horse, and ordered an early breakfast, and that my horse should be ready in the morning at sunrise. But, to my surprise and chagrin, when I started to mount, Henry Hubbard's sulky, with his fast trotter before it, stood at the door. We greeted each other, but not as cordially a usual.

"Go ahead, Henry," said I; "you know these swamps and sloughs, and you must be my guide and pilot. I'll follow you."

And so, each knowing the business of the other, but neither speaking of it, we started. Nothing of special interest occurred, except, I fancied, from the places through which he led me, he was quite willing I should be stalled, swamped, or thrown into the mud. But my horse had long legs, and was accustomed to these prairies and sloughs, and would often stand with all his feet on a bunch of rushes, or other hard space, twelve or twenty inches in diameter, and then reach out one of his forward feet and actually feel for a firm footing before he would move. I gave him his head, and he took me safe across. On the way, we had to cross the "Grand Prairie," thirty miles without house, cabin, tree, or bush. As far as the eye

could reach, nothing but blue sky above, and the green, tender grass of early May and wild flowers beneath. It was a lonely ride. Hubbard was far ahead. I remember, after riding for hours, I dismounted, lay down upon the turf, and let my horse crop the new grass and fragrant violets, and, I think, never before or since have I had such a sense of solitude and lonesomeness. I was miles away from any human being, and I realized that such a prairie is more solitary than the ocean or the forest.

Hubbard generally took the lead, and I got sight of him only two or three times a-day. It was obvious both were saving the strength of our horses for the last 15 or 20 miles. The last night, we stopped about fifteen miles from Danville, and slept in the same log-cabin. The morning sun saw us both ready for the final struggle; both our horses being in prety good condition. As Hubbard went to the stable, a man dressed in blue jeans, with a coon-skin cap on his head, came up to me, and said, "Stranger, I don't know ye, nor kere much about ye; but I don't like t' other fellow. He is troubled with the *big head;* and he has been oncivil to me. I hearn say, 't is a tight race between ye, which shall git to Danville first. Now, Stranger, I'll help ye. But don't let on. Let him," pointing to Hubbard, "start ahead; I'll put my boy there on your gray, and let him follow slowly behind, not too far, a mile or more behind, so your gray horse can be seen, but the rider won't be known." He continued, "I've got a pair of colts I'll hitch up, and I'll take ye by another road into Danville, thirty to sixty minutes ahead of that fellow."

I saw it was my only chance. My gray was saddled, and when Hubbard had got too far ahead to distinguish the rider, the boy was mounted, and told not to shorten the distance, but just keep the sulky in sight. Hubbard, seeing the gray behind him, traveled slowly, saving his horse for the last five or six miles. Meanwhile, the colts had been harnessed, and attached to a light wagon, and making a circuit, we struck a cross-road, and, traveling at a three-minute pace, passed on ahead of Hubbard into Danville. Arriving, I found the sheriff; had him quickly seize and attach the store and property of the defendant, and when, an hour later, Hubbard came in, you may judge of

his surprise and vexation when he found me, whom he had supposed far behind, with the sheriff, in possession of all the debtor's property. And it was thus I won the race and secured Ogden's debt. The gallant gray did not long survive, and I missed him sadly, for I had often ridden him; but Ogden did not object to pay Nickols liberally for the gray horse with which I beat Hubbard.

A FLAG FOR THE STEAMER ILLINOIS.

On Tuesday afternoon, July 23d, 1839, forty-two years ago, there lay, just below where Rush-Street Bridge now is, at the wharf of Newberry & Dole, a magnificent steamer, that in size, model, and external appearance might be compared with the finest "Cunard" or "White Star" ship that now traverses the Ocean. At that time, we had no completed line of railways to the Atlantic coast, and our intercourse with the East, socially and commercially, was by means of steamboats.

The steamer that lay at the wharf of Newberry & Dole was the "Illinois," named for our State. She was new, and this was her first season on the Lakes. The citizens of Chicago had purchased and were now to present to Capt. Blake, her commander, and to Oliver Newberry, her owner, a suit of colors worthy of such a splendid boat. Wm. B. Ogden, then, as ever, one of our most prominent citizens, was selected to make the presentation speech. It was a lovely summer afternoon, and our little City of scarcely 4000 people turned out, *en masse*, to witness the spectacle. Fort Dearborn, directly opposite, and all the shipping in the river were gay with the national colors floating from every flag-staff, peak, and mast-head.

Mr. Ogden was a natural orator, and his manly voice, on this occasion, could be distinctly heard by the crowd on the wharf as well as on the deck of the steamer. After complimenting the "splendid specimen of naval architecture" on which he stood, and expressing his pleasure in being the organ of presenting the "appropriate gift" to the steamer bearing the name of our State, he spoke of the wonderfully rapid advance of our country, and the means of communication, bringing the East and the West, the Hudson and the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi into con-

venient neighborhood. I remember a bold and striking figure in which he compared the "prairie fires," which at that time annually were seen to invade our wide, and then unsettled, city limits, to the "pillar of fire by night," lighting the "path of Empire on its westward way." He then paid a glowing tribute to the memory of Robert Fulton, but for whose genius, he said, "the lake and the prairie around us would have still remained in the wild solitude of nature. There would have been, but for Fulton, no Steamer 'Illinois,' no Chicago, and the broad and beautiful prairies around us would have continued long 'to waste their sweetness on the desert air'." Turning to Capt. Blake, and unfurling a splendid silk banner, fit for an admiral, Maj.-Gen. Scott standing at his side, he said: "We present to you our country's flag. * * * To you it is no stranger; under a most valiant chief (bowing to Gen. Scott), whom a grateful people have not forgot to praise, bravely and honorably have you defended it in war. * * * Stand by it in peace—stand by it forever." In conclusion, he said: "For this noble craft, we would ask of Him who rules the raging storm and bids the rising waves be still, to save her from storm and tempest, from rocks and shoals, and bring her in safety to her destined haven. * * * Oft shall she bring to us, as she cuts through the swelling waves, many that we love, and when, with eager haste, it shall be our privilege to return once more to scenes of childhood's happy hours; once more to seek a parent's blessing, a sister's, brother's fond embrace; once more to view our native hills, and valleys, and streams; where, when a child, we gambolled wild and free, through every wooded glen; safely, swiftly, will she bear us, until we greet again our Fatherland."

Walter L. Newberry, on behalf of his brother, Oliver Newberry, replied, and then, with Gen. Scott and a gay and merry party, she steamed north to Gross-Point, near where now is Evanston, thence down to the Calumet, and returned to her dock.

While on her way, Chicago's earliest ballad-singer, Geo. Davis, sung a beautiful song, composed by himself, for the occasion, from which I extract the following:

"We bid thee God-speed, thou beautiful boat,
Queen of the Prairie Sea.
Oh, long may thy fame on the billows float,
And thy colors wave high on the breeze.

Here's a health to the boat and her gallant crew,
From shoals may she ever steer free,
And long may Blake sail, till the wild waves ring
As she sails o'er the Western sea."

GENERAL SCOTT.

Speaking of Gen. Scott brings to my mind an incident which, although having no relation to Mr. Ogden, I trust you will pardon me for mentioning. A few years after the presentation of these colors to the "Illinois," and before there was any railway communication with the East, I sailed around the Lakes with Gen. Scott and his brilliant staff of young officers. He had been much talked of for the Presidency, and was gracious and affable, and added greatly to the pleasure of the long voyage. We arrived on Friday evening, Aug. 2d, 1844, the General stopping at the Lake House. Soon after our arrival, Mrs. Kinzie sent for me, and stating that the rector of St. James' was out of the City, and, as Gen. Scott would be at church on Sunday, some one must read a sermon. She asked if I would do so? "If so, I will send you," she continued, "a volume of sermons from which you can make your own selection." I promised to read the sermon, some one else having been selected to read the prayers and service. I found a most brilliant sermon upon "Vanity," a weakness for which Gen. Scott, with all his great qualities, was notorious. As a good joke, and without much consideration, I thought I would improve the opportunity to preach what my clerical friends, I suppose, would call a practical sermon. On Sunday, the church was filled with a great crowd, eager to see Gen. Scott. He came in, attended by a numerous and brilliant staff, in full uniform, and they were assigned places in the front seats, directly before the reading-desk. I began the sermon, and, as I read, I could not help emphasizing the passages which seemed applicable to the General. Soon I noticed his staff exchanging sly glances with each other, and then others giving indications

that they were applying the sermon to my distinguished hearer. With too little reverence I thought it all a good joke, and went on and finished my sermon.

On Monday, I called to pay my respects to Gen. Scott, and after a courteous interview, he said, "Mr. Arnold, you read a very good sermon yesterday, but some of my young men have been saying you intended to make a personal application to me; but I have assured them it was a mere accident that your sermon was on vanity."

I replied, "that like the clergy, I simply read the sermon, leaving the hearers to make the application." "'If the coat should fit, let him whom it fitted put it on.'"

"Well," said the noble old soldier, "the world and the newspapers call me vain. Perhaps I am, and perhaps I have done some things of which a man might justly be proud, if not vain—of this posterity will judge." "But," continued he, after a pause, "it seems to me the newspapers are harsh in their judgments. Clay has his vices," and he named some of which that statesman was accused. "Webster has his faults, and the world knows what they are—faults graver than vanity; and yet some people make much more ado about my vanity, which, if I am vain, only injures me, than about the graver errors of Clay and Webster."

GENERAL WORTH.

Will you pardon me for another reminiscence of these early days, illustrating, shall I say, the deterioration of manners. Gen. Worth was a warm, personal friend of Mr. Ogden. He visited him in Chicago. I remember that, in those days, when a steamer signalled its approach, and when distinguished strangers were coming, we used to go down to the wharf, some to welcome and others to see those who came. I witnessed on the landing of Gen. Worth one of the saddest spectacles I ever saw. Among the crowd of citizens, who met him, was a retired army officer, his old classmate, as I was told, at West Point. He had been intrusted by the Government with a large sum of public money, and, in the tempest of speculation, had used it, doubtless with the expectation of making it good; but disastrous times came on, and he proved a defaulter to a large amount. He went forward with others

to greet and welcome his old comrade and schoolmate. As he extended his hand, I shall never forget the look of Worth. Drawing his tall martial form up to his full height, and throwing his military cloak over his shoulders, he stood a moment, looking at the defaulter, and then turning upon his heel, seemed to say, "I can not touch the hand of a defaulter." Scott's lines in Marmion came to my mind:

"The hand of Douglas is his own,
And never shall in friendly grasp,
The hand of such as Marmion clasp."

The act seemed cruel. It was terrible in its severity. In those days, and with such a high sense of personal honor, a defaulter among officers of the army was rare indeed. If those who cheat and plunder the Government were today, as in those early days, visited with absolute social ostracism, such offences would become far less numerous.

THE CASE OF M'CAGG, REED AND CO. *vs.* GALENA, CHICAGO UNION RAILROAD.

The father of the vast railway system in the North-West, a system which has done so much to develop and build up this portion of our country, was Wm. B. Ogden. Beginning with the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad, from Chicago to Fox River, with a far-seeing sagacity and bold enterprise, and a faith which led him to invest in these works not only his private fortune but his credit, he kept pace with, or anticipated, the growth of the West; until from the strap-railway, from Chicago to Elgin, he went on step by step until he was the President of the Union Pacific, being connected more or less with all the great roads from the East by the Lakes to the Mississippi, and on to Lake Superior.

In the earlier of these great enterprises he met many associates who were more conservative, less sagacious, and more prudent than he. Some of them thought him wild and extravagant, and his schemes most hazardous. These views and their influence caused a division in the Stockholders and Board of Directors of the old Galena Road, of which Mr. Ogden was the first, and for some time, Presi-

dent, and, during a severe depression in all business affairs, he was dropped from the presidency, and an attempt was made to injure his reputation. When president or acting-director of the Galena Road, he was also special partner of the firm of McCagg, Reed & Co., a firm largely engaged in the manufacture and sale of lumber. The Road having little money, this lumber firm, of which he was a partner, at his request, furnished *on credit* a large number of ties for the *Road*. When Mr. Ogden retired from the presidency, the ties not having been paid for, the new officers refused payment, on the ground that Mr. Ogden as president had contracted with himself as a member of the firm of McCagg, Reed & Co. for the ties, and that such contract was tainted with fraud, and therefore void.

On behalf of McCagg, Reed & Ogden, I brought a suit against the Road for the ties, and proved not only that the price charged was below the market price, but, also, that the Road, in its crippled condition, could not procure the materials elsewhere, and that without this purchase it could not have been built, and, of course, a recovery and judgment was obtained for the amount claimed. The suit was most bitterly and obstinately contested, and the defence was ably conducted by Messrs. Collins & Butterfield and Judd & Wilson. Mr. Ogden was then my most intimate friend; he had given his time, his money, and his credit to push on the Road, and had risked in it his private fortune, and I regarded the defence of this case, and the attack made upon his integrity, as most unjust and ungrateful. I remember few, if any, cases in my professional life, in which I felt a deeper personal interest. A verdict against him would have left a stain upon his character. In the course of the trial it came out in evidence that the officers of the Road, after he had been compelled to retire, had received a public dinner (I think at Elgin), in which they drank toasts to each other and every body, except Mr. Ogden. The omission of his name, the man who every one knew had built the Road, only made him the more prominent. This dinner and the omission of Mr. Ogden's name among the benefactors of the Galena Road was the subject of much comment on the trial. His case was compared to that of Cromwell, whose omission among the kings of England had only made him the more conspicuous.

Mr. Ogden's triumph and vindication were complete, and his opponents, on this occasion, became afterward his warm friends, aiding him in conducting to success many important enterprises.

SPECULATION.

As illustrating the wonderfully rapid advance in the value of property in our City, which, in forty years, grew from a population of about 4500 in 1840, to 500,000 in 1880, let me quote two or three examples from Mr. Ogden's note-book. He says "I purchased in 1845, property for $15,000 which, twenty years thereafter, in 1865, was worth ten millions of dollars. In 1844, I purchased for $8000, what, eight years thereafter, sold for three millions of dollars, and these cases could be extended almost indefinitely." This rapid advance turned the heads of many sober-minded men, and produced a frenzy which unfitted them for ordinary business.

We had, in those days, the jocose, genial, witty Dr. Egan before mentioned, whose real-estate transactions were bold, off-hand, and sometimes as reckless as the wildest gambling. The result was, that the Doctor had his ups and downs from poverty to wealth, from luxurious extravagance to bankruptcy; today, a Jay Gould, tomorrow, ruined. In those days, "Canal Time" had a clear and universally understood meaning, and signified one-quarter of the purchase-money in hand, and the balance in one, two, and three years, the terms on which the Canal Trustees sold canal lots and lands. One day, in the midst of this excitement, Dr. Egan was called to see a lady, who was very ill. After examining her, he left such medicine as he thought she required, and, as he was hastening away, the lady discovered he had left no directions. Calling him back, she said, "Why, Doctor, you have given me no directions, how much or how often I am to take the medicine." "Oh!" replied he, as in his impatience he held the door open, his mind evidently on some land purchase, "Oh, one-quarter down, balance in one, two, and three years!"

OGDEN'S HOME.

There is not, today, in our wealthy and luxurious City,

there never has been, a residence more attractive, more home-like, more beautiful than that of Mr. Ogden, and which, with all its treasures of art and books, was destroyed in the great fire of 1871. I wish I could reproduce it, or create such a picture of it as would enable those who never gathered around its hospitable fireside, to realize its simple elegance and comfort.

The house, built in 1836, stood in the centre of block 35, in Kinzie's Addition to Chicago, and was bounded on the east by Rush, on the south by Ontario, on the west by Cass, and on the north by Erie Streets. W. L. Newberry's residence directly east and occupying an entire block; my own house, the only building on Block 41, one street north; and St. James' Church on Block 40, between Erie and Huron; Judge Mark Skinner's home directly south; and diagonally south-west was the fine residence of H. H. Magee, with the majestic elm near State Street; all these grounds being covered with a natural forest, gave to the neighborhood a rural, suburban aspect, novel for a locality so near the centre of the City. Indeed, so dense was the foliage around us that standing in my front door in June, and looking south, I could see nothing but a mass of green leaves, except at times a flag from the top of a high mast in the river.

The block occupied by Mr. Ogden was covered with a fine growth of maple, cotton-wood, oak, ash, cherry, elm, birch, and hickory trees, in the centre of which stood his large double house, built of wood. A broad piazza with a projecting pediment, supported by pillars, extended across the south front. On the north-east, and extending from Rush on Erie one hundred and fifty feet, was a conservatory always bright and gay with flowers, also, fruit houses, consisting of a cold grapery and a forcing house in which he raised exotic grapes, peaches, apricots, and figs. A drive around the house, and neatly-kept gravelled walks, traversed the natural forest of noble trees, festooned with the wild grape, the American ivy, and other wild vines; and everywhere were ornamental shrubs, climbing roses, and other flowers. His flower and fruit-houses were not made bright and fragrant, "to waste their sweetness on the desert air." He grew fruits and flowers for his friends and

especially for the sick. He never forgot in his busiest days to visit the suffering, and he always took with him the choicest products of his fruit and green-houses, and his cheering smile, his encouraging words, and his exhilerating tonic presence, were better than medicine.

Within his house was a good working library, a few pieces of statuary, and many fine pictures and engravings. Durand, Cropsey, Wier, Kensett, Church, Rossiter, Powers, Healy and others were all well represented.

In this home of generous and liberal hospitality was found no lavish or vulgar exhibition of wealth, no ostentatious or pretentious display, such as is too often seen, exhibiting alike the owner's riches in money and poverty in culture and intellect, and utter lack of taste. On the contrary, here were refinement, broad intelligence, kind courtesy, and real hospitality. Here he gathered from far and near the most worthy, the most distinguished representatives of the best American social life. Here all prominent and distinguished strangers were welcomed and entertained, and here, too, the most humble and poor, if distinguished for merit or culture or ability, were always most cordially received. Here he entertained Van Buren, Webster, Poinsett, Marcy, Flag, Butler, Gilpin, Corning, Crosswell, Tilden, Bryant, Emmerson,* Miss Martineau, Fredrika Bremer, Margaret Fuller, the artist, Healy, Anne C. Lynch, and many others, comprising some of the best representative men and women of our own country, and the most distinguished visitors from abroad. The guest always found good books, good pictures, good music, and the most kind and genial reception. Mr. Ogden himself, however, was always the chief attraction; he was in his way without an equal as a conversationalist. His powers of narration and description were unrivalled.

* I have lately received a letter from Rev. Robert Collyer, now of New York City, saying: "I once heard Mr. Emmerson say, he thought Mr. Ogden the ablest man he had met in the West. 'He seemed,' said he, 'to have the whole land within his brain.' Mr. Collyer adds, "I liked him (Ogden), loved to hear him talk, and to feel what a kindly, genial heart it was which lay within."

In this connection, let me read a note from Mr. Healy:*

With the clear good sense of Mr. Ogden there was mingled a vein of sentiment, of poetic feeling, and an appreciation of the beautiful in nature and art, which made him exceedingly attractive. While there was no formality, and while everybody was made to feel quite at home and perfectly at ease, there was always a high-bred courtesy and consideration for others, a respect for age and reverence for God and religion, a tone of elevation and regard for worth and merit, which made his home a positive influence, a real power for good. He early brought to his house his mother and sisters, and it is difficult to overestimate the influence of such a home in moulding the early social life of our City. No one ever saw excess or intemperance at his abundant table; a glass of good wine, but no excess. I think this example had considerable influence in establishing that freedom from intemperance and vice for which the best society in Chicago has always been distinguished.

* New York, Park Avenue Hotel,

October, 31, 1881.

"My Dear Mr. Arnold:—I shall long remember your agreeable visit to this Hotel to see my works, and your conversation with my sitter, a mutual friend of long standing. You mentioned that you were on your way to see Mrs. William B. Ogden, who has given to the Chicago Historical Society my portrait of her late husband, on the presentation of which, to that noble Institution, you are to make some remarks, in memory of Mr. Ogden. You expressed a wish that I should write you a note giving some traits of Mr. Ogden's great charm of manner.

"In the summer of 1855, Dr. Brainard presented me to Mr. Ogden, who also sat to me. I found him in conversation a worthy rival of the three best I ever met, *viz.:* Louis Phillippe, John Quincy Adams, and Dr. O. A. Bronson. M. Guizot once called at my *atelier*, in Paris, accompanied by the Duc de Montebello, to see the whole-length portrait of Mr. Ogden, that was lost in the Chicago fire. Said the great historian and statesman, "That is the representative American, who is a benefactor of his country, especially the mighty West: he built and owns Chicago."

"I remarked, 'Pardon me, M. Guizot, doubtless he owns much, but not all.' He answered, with spirit;

He was a lover of music and painting and poetry. Indeed, he possessed a sensibility to beauty in every form, and to the expression of noble sentiment in the arts and in literature, very rare in a man so absorbed in business and in great enterprises. He was never more attractive than in his library reciting the poetry of Bryant, Halleck, Holmes, Burns, Moore, and Scott; or at his piano, playing an accompaniment to his own voice as he sang with expression, if not with artistic skill, the simple ballads of Burns and Moore, and other songs popular thirty years ago.

Perhaps I ought to make an exception, when he was driving his own carriage, filled with guests, over the prairies of the North-West, for then he would make the longest day short by his inimitable narration of incidents and anecdote, his graphic descriptions, and his sanguine anticipations of the future. His was one of those sympathetic natures that brought gladness into every circle he entered. His smile was like the sunshine to the landscape. He developed and brought into action whatever was good in

"'Yes; all, all.'

"I am indebted to Mr. Ogden and Dr. Brainard, more than to any others, for my visit to Chicago, in the autumn of 1855. My intention was to remain a month or six weeks, and I was delightfully entertained for fourteen years! My first patrons were the late Dr. Brainard and Hon. I. N. Arnold, those works, alas, were lost in the fire.

"Mr. Ogden invited me to pass my first winter there in his house, where I had a full opportunity to observe how charmingly he entertained. In his conversation with ladies, I was reminded of what the Dutchess of Argyle said of Robert Burns — She never derived so much pleasure from an hour's conversation with any one, as in the company of that gifted man. Mrs. Henry D. Gilpin of Philadelphia, absolutely made use of her Grace's words, in regard to Mr. Ogden.

"I am afraid, my dear friend, that I shall be unable to see you and my many other friends in Chicago, before I return to Europe. My son, of the firm of Healy & Miller, is with you, where my heart will ever be.

"Present my affectionate regards to your family.

"Faithfully yours, GEO. P. A. HEALY.

"HON. ISAAC N. ARNOLD."

those with whom he associated. I fear, those of you who did not know him intimately, will think me extravagant, but it was really true that those who saw much of him were so helped that they were capable of doing more and better than they could otherwise have done. His nature was an inspiration and a stimulant. We sometimes meet those whose faces and presence are like a sombre cloud upon a landscape, it was the reverse with him. He brightened the path of every one with whom he walked. No one entered his presence who was not made happier, and made to think better of themselves, and of others, of life and humanity. He was a warm-hearted, generous man, and his attachment to his family and friends was rarely equalled. I know of some circumstances, exhibiting his tenderness and affection almost too sacred for public disclosure. But there is one incident I will venture to mention. His intimate friends knew of his early and romantic attachment to a beautiful girl, whose death, after their engagement and before the day fixed for their marriage, cast a shadow upon, and tinged with a tender sadness, much of his after-life.

I recall a dark, stormy night, in Dec., 1843, when we were living together, at his house on Ontario Street. The wild winter wind was moaning through the trees, which stood close to the building, a great wood-fire was burning upon the old-fashioned andirons. It was late in the evening, we were alone, and had been narrating to each other incidents of boyhood—on the Delaware and the Susquehanna. We had been speaking of schoolmates and early friends.

Earlier in the evening, he had been humming old and half-forgotten ballads. In this way, time passed on, but he took no note of it, and seemed wholly absorbed in his memories. The fire burned low, the hour grew late, but still he kept on speaking of the past, and, finally, he went to his own room, and soon returned with a parcel of carefully-preserved, but long-ago-faded flowers; roses, pansies, some old garden flowers,—a ribbon, a glove,—some notes, and a little poem,—all tenderly-cherished relics of one from whom, many and long years before, he had been separated by death, and around whose grave, amidst all

the active and absorbing scenes, in which he was living, his memory still lingered fondly and faithfully. He never forgot the Sabbath chimes, with which her voice had mingled. Half-a-century after her death, when making his last "will and testament," he remembered this romance of his youth, and made liberal and generous provision for the nearest-surviving relatives of one to whose memory he was so faithful. If Ogden had faults and failings,—and who has not,—if there are any who would harshly recall them, let such remember his fidelity and affection, and in the recollection of his noble nature forget his failings.

HIS LOVE OF NATURE.

He was a real lover of nature, and Bryant was his favorite poet, because in his poetry he found such graphic descriptions of natural objects. The "scolloped hills" and the murmuring streams, in the picturesque valleys of old Delaware and Otsego and Chenango, were to him never-ending scenes of pleasant recollection. As illustrating his love of nature, I recall a visit we made together in 1838, to the Calumet and its neighborhood. His observing eye had marked it as peculiarly rich in wild and ornamental flowering shrubs and vines. One morning in early May, we started, with picks and spades, with a pair of strong horses, to dig up and bring to his new home a wagon-load of this wild shrubbery. We found and brought back the Carolina rose, the dog-wood, the red ozier, the kinnekanink, the Virginia creeper, the bitter-sweet, and many other wild vines.

At another time, we made an excursion to the Calumet for that queen of lilies, the Lotus (Nelumbium Luteum). Not the Nile itself could exhibit a more magnificent spectacle than the Calumet in those early days, with acres and acres—nay, miles—of this glorious flower, with its broad leaves floating upon the water, and its gorgeous color illuminating the surface. Here one might linger,

"Eating the Lotus day by day.

But life in the West, and especially in Chicago, was far too active for us to linger more than a few hours in "Lotus dreams." We realized it was for us rather to act amid

"A race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil."

We felt that success could be obtained alone by those

"Who scorn delight,
And live laborious days."

WHAT HE DID FOR CHICAGO AND THE NORTH-WEST.

I have thus far given you a narrative of personal incidents, with the hope, in this way, of making you better acquainted with Mr. Ogden than I could by attempting to describe in detail the active and useful life he lived and the great and important works which he initiated and carried forward to success.

In the spring of 1837, he was elected mayor—the first mayor of Chicago. From that time until his death, in 1877, he was constantly engaged in public works. He made miles upon miles of streets; he zealously advocated the public parks; he was a leading contractor on the Illinois-and-Michigan Canal, and ever one of its ablest and most efficient advocates; he was President of the Board of Sewerage Commissioners; and there is scarcely a railroad leading to or from Chicago, east, west, north or south, with which he has not had important association, and to which he did not render efficient service, so that his acts are written in lines of *iron* all over the West.

I shall not attempt to enumerate these, his important services, in detail. But there is one circumstance which, in this connection, can not in justice to him be omitted. We have to-day great railroad kings, as they are called: Vanderbilts, Jay Goulds, and others; but they build, manage, and sometimes some of them, it is said, wreck railroads, to accumulate and control vast fortunes. Mr. Ogden's great work in constructing railroads was as a *pioneer*, and his services were to a great extent gratuitous and unselfish. In June, 1868, he retired from the Presidency of the Northwestern Railroad, one of the greatest, if not the greatest, railroad corporations in the world; and when retiring, stated that he had been connected with the Road for twenty-one years, since 1847. On that occasion, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Stockholders:

"*Resolved*, That his (W. B. Ogden's) connection with this Company, dating back for a period of twenty-one years, his disinterested labors in its behalf without fee or reward during the whole time, the benefit he has conferred upon it and the country, demand our grateful acknowledgments, and we hereby tender him our warmest thanks for his long services and our best wishes for his long-continued health and prosperity."

One other fact in this connection: In 1859, he was offered the Receivership of the Fort Wayne and Chicago Railway, pending its consolidation, at a salary of $25,000 per annum. He declined on account of other important public and private obligations; but finally, when told that the parties interested could agree upon no other person, he accepted the position, refusing the salary, $25,000, because, he said, the Road could not afford to pay it, and accepting only $10,000, when pressed upon him.

"STRIKE, BUT HEAR ME."

Let me recall an incident illustrating his power over men. When building some of his Wisconsin railroads, he and others had obtained large stock-subscriptions from the farmers and villagers along the line. Hard times came on; the subscriptions had been paid, but the Road was not finished, and the people became extremly exasperated against him. They thought they had been swindled, and they declared they would shoot him if he ever came into that part of the country. He heard of these threats, and sent hand-bills along the line, calling a public meeting and announcing that he would address the people. A great crowd of excited men gathered. Believing themselves wronged, they were ready for any violence. His friends tried to prevail on him not to go. They thought his life was in danger. He declared he had no fear, and went to the meeting. He was received with hisses, and groans, and denunciation. He was alone and unarmed, and appealed to their sense of justice and fair-play to give him a hearing, and adding, after that, they might condemn and shoot if they pleased. In his own clear and candid way, he detailed the facts; told them of his own sacrifices and losses for the Road, and by what unavoidable disasters it had been delayed; and then, in his san-

guine manner, he painted its success in the future, pointed out that it would double the value of every farm, and when he concluded, instead of Lynching him, they appointed a committee to wait upon him, which said—

"Mr. Ogden: We are authorized by the farmers, and other stockholders along the road, to say, if you wish it, we will double our subscriptions."

HIS POLITICS.

In early life, he was, as he called himself, a Jeffersonian Democrat. He went into the New-York Legislature as a Democrat, aud was elected Mayor of Chicago by the Democratic party, defeating John H. Kinzie, who was the Whig candidate for that office. But he was never a partisan; and when the question of slavery became prominent by the annexation of Texas, he was an earnest anti-slavery man. He was in full sympathy with those of us from Illinois who, in 1848, went to the Buffalo Convention and organized the Free-Soil Party, and he headed the electoral ticket in this State, in favor of Van Buren and Adams; and from that time on, to 1860, he was an active member of the Free-Soil and Republican parties. He supported earnestly Mr. Lincoln for the Presidency, and was elected to the Illinois Legislature on the same ticket.

Between 1860 and 1862, he seems to have fallen under influences which finally alienated him from the policy of Mr. Lincoln. He expressed, and I doubt not entertained, fears that the Administration, by the exercise of what were called the "War Powers," was revolutionizing the government. He did not approve of the "Emancipation Proclamation." These considerations brought Mr. Ogden into political antagonism with many of his old personal and political friends in Chicago.

He was liberal and generous in his contributions to the various charitable and literary enterprises of the City. As head of the Ogden family, he was a most devoted brother, uncle, and relative. Somewhat late in life, Feb. 9th, 1875, he married Miss Arnot, a daughter of Judge Arnot, of Elmira, New York. He had been a warm personal friend of her father, and intimate in her family for many years, and they had known each other, in the most friendly way,

from her school-days, and the only mistake about the marriage was, that it did not take place twenty or thirty years earlier.

THE FIRES OF 1871.

In 1871, Mr. Ogden was living in quiet at Boscobel. He had, as his friends supposed, done his work. He had built a City, and had helped to create an Empire in the North-West. He was still interested in many and vast and various enterprises; but he had entrusted their direct management to others, and he had retired to his country-seat and was seeking, after a long and active life, well-earned repose. His picturesque home, situated on a rocky hill, overlooked the Harlem and Hudson Rivers, and the arches of High Bridge; and, in the distance, Washington Heights. He was realizing Downing's ideal of the beautiful in landscape gardening. No one had earned, by long and successful work, a better title to his "*otium cum dignitate*." He had placed the helm of his great enterprises in other hands. He was indulging in this repose, when, on the 8th of October, at Boscobel the startling intelligence came thrilling along the wires, "All Chicago is on fire!" "Chicago is burning!" "Chicago is burned up!" "A whirlwind of fire is sweeping over Peshtigo."

It has been wisely said that nothing tries a man like adversity—like some crushing calamity. I know of few scenes in history or fiction more thrilling than Mr. Ogden's arrival in Chicago, on the 10th of October. At ten o'clock on Tuesday evening, he reached the smoking ruins of what had been Chicago. He had received despatches along the railroad of the progress of the flames, but he was unprepared—no one could be prepared, for no one could conceive—the utter and complete desolation which met him on every side. Coming in on the Fort Wayne Road, he had to traverse the track of the ocean of flame, as it had swept with annihilating vehemence over the south side of City. Public buildings, City Hall, churches, banks, hotels, stores, warehouses, offices, homes—every thing gone. He had been informed that his own house was the only one in the North division which had escaped. Crossing the river

into that part of the city which he had built and in which he had lived, he drove to Ontario Street, eargerly seeking his old home. He could not find it; he could not find any body's home, nor place of business. Every house—every structure—from the river to Lincoln Park, *in ashes*. He was bewildered and lost in this scene of utter desolation. All was gone except, not *his* house—but the house of his brother, Mahlon D. Ogden. This stood solitary and alone amidst the smouldering ruins, where a few hours before had been the homes of 100,000 people. Do you remember Milton's description of Hell, in "Paradise Lost?" Recall it, and it will help you to realize the fiery ruin which surrounded him. As he drove north along the still-smoking wooden pavements of Clark Street,

"On all sides around
As one great furnace flamed.
* * * * * *
The dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation. Void of light
Save where the glimmering of the lurid flames
Cast pale and dreadful."

At last, and late at night, he found the house of his brother; and as he approached he was halted and challenged by the guard on duty. The criminal classes had been plundering the burning city, and they had threatened to burn this house also, where it was supposed money and treasure had been stored, and it had been decided to set a guard, with rifles, around the premises. Mr. Ogden, on announcing his name, was passed in by General Strong.

As in the obscurity of night he took his lonely, gloomy drive, he must have recalled Chicago as he first saw it—this scene, now so black and lurid, where not a tree, nor shrub, nor leaf, could be found—every thing charred—all ashes—fragments of charcoal and melted iron—he had first seen green with grass, foliage, and forest. With the aid of others, he had transformed it into a beautiful city, and now all was destroyed—the work and toil of half a century was annihilated. But he met all—I will not say like a hero, but like a Christian hero. The following day, he received intelligence of the utter destruction of his im-

mense lumber establishment at Peshtigo, and this was aggravated by a horrible destruction of life. His individual loss, in the two fires, exceeded two millions of dollars. Staying in Chicago only long enough to inspire hope, courage, and energy, in the stricken people, on Saturday he started for Peshtigo, where he was much more needed by the almost despairing survivors. He was accompanied by General Strong, who has written a most graphic description of the Peshtigo fire, from which I quote, and which I trust will be printed, so as to perpetuate so powerful a sketch of one of the most terrible calamities which ever befell any village.

They paused, in their approach, on an elevation which overlooked the burnt district. All was gone! Factories, mills, shops, stores, hotels, boarding-houses, dwellings, warehouses, sheds, fences, bridges—every thing burned. And so clear and complete had been the destruction, not enough was left to mark localities. The poor animals also, the horses and mules, and the domestic animals, all burned, and still more shocking, three hundred and fifteen of the men, women, and children perished in the cruel flames. I quote a few sentences from General Strong's description. He says:

"At 9 o'clock, on the evening of October 8th, many of the Peshtigo people were returning to their homes from their respective churches. The night was dark, and the smoke hung in low and heavy masses over the doomed village. Not a breath of air was stirring. The stillness of death prevailed. Suddenly away to the South-West could be heard a roar like the roar of the sea. Men, women, and children stopped in the streets to listen with wildly-beating hearts. The roar increased. It came nearer and nearer—it spread out—it grew louder, and more continuous, and more frightful in its tone. Something terrible was about to happen, but of what nature? * * * It was fire, and it was close by, and yet there was no blaze, no flame, but the terrible roaring was there, and away to the South-West it grew in volume at every breath, at every throb of the heart. The people in the streets rush wildly now for their homes and loved ones. * * *

The buildings, on both sides of the river, seemed to be on fire at the same instant. Many of the survivors claim to this day, that the fire came straight down from the clouds. Many of the citizens made no effort to escape, thinking the Judgment-day had

come; and, it is said, that a number of elderly persons knelt in prayer in their homes, and were burned to death in the act of praying. The village was on fire about 9:30 o'clock, and in less than two hours was destroyed. The mass of the people were paralyzed with fear. It is known that a large number of women and children were burned in the Company's boarding-house. They were urged to leave it, and take refuge in the river, which was but a few hundred feet away, but would not make the effort. Many were burned in the churches, and near the river, north of the village."

In the face of his terrible calamity—of these tremendous losses, sweeping away the accumulations of a life of almost unparalleled activity and enterprise—Mr. Ogden was calm. He did not murmur nor complain. "It is the act of God," said he; "we are not responsible." "We will," continued he, "rebuild this village—the mills, the shops—and do a larger winter's logging than ever before."

And so, with the energy of early manhood, he took off his coat, and went to work to restore what was gone. He remained all through October, November, into December, superintending and directing the work. At daylight in the morning, he was up, and worked with the men till dark; constantly exposed to the rain and sleet and snow. When night came, he would go on an open car, drawn by mules, eight miles to the harbor. All the evening, until late in the night, he was engaged with his clerks and assistants, in drawing plans, writing letters, and sending telegrams to his agents, and the next morning, break-of-day would find him again at the head of his men at Peshtigo. During all this period, he was cheerful and pleasant, and inspired every body with courage and faith in the future. This terrible strain upon him, and overwork, for a man of his years, probably shortened his life. I can not forbear quoting the closing paragraph of General Strong's paper. He says:

"Thus far in life, I have been associated with no one equal to him, in business capacity, in energy, in perseverance. He possessed many of the qualites of a great and successful General, *viz.:* Unflinching courage, coolness in times of danger, rare presence of mind in emergencies, decision, a constitution of iron, great physical strength, executive power of a high order, ability

to master quickly the details of any thing he had on hand, firmness of purpose, faith in his own judgment and plans, and an unbending will to carry through to completion, and against all opposition, *any thing* he undertook. In the planning and management of large enterprises, while in the prime of life, he had no superior, and I believe few equals."

Mr. Healy has attempted to represent on canvas this princely man. Mr. Healy is a great artist; he has painted more distinguished men, perhaps, than any artist living. In this country, he has painted Governors, Generals, Senators, Presidents, Heroes, and Statesmen; abroad, Earls, Dukes, Field-Marshals, Princes, Kings, Popes, and Emperors have sat to him, but it may well be doubted, if among them all, he ever had a finer subject than Ogden. But yet how little of such a man can be reproduced by pen or pencil.

We know this; however the artist or the writer may fail, the man, we have tried tonight to honor—will not be forgotten. His name will be forever connected with this City and the North-West.

Perhaps, the most striking trait of his character was his absolute faith in Chicago. He saw, in 1836, not only the Chicago of today, but in the future the great City of the continent. From that early day, his faith never wavered. Come good times—come bad times—come prosperity or adversity—Chicago booming, or Chicago in ashes, its great future was to him a fixed fact.

The fame of the founders of Cities and States grows as time passes on, and so it will be with him. When, some centuries from now, after obscurity shall have gathered over the present, when fable and legend and myth shall obscure our early history, as moss gathers over the ruins of ancient temples, the first Mayor of Chicago will be remembered. Who dare prophesy what Chicago will be then? But this we know, when, centuries from now, the the birth of Chicago as a City, and the inauguration of its first Mayor shall be commemorated, the name of William B. Ogden will be honored and cherished by the millions who shall join in that celebration.

Since the foregoing was written, I have received the following note, which with your permission I will now read. The incident mentioned strikingly illustrates Mr. Ogden's wonderful power over men, and his ability to inspire personal attachment and confidence in those with whom he associated :

403 LaSalle Avenue,
Chicago, Dec. 18, 1881.

Dear Sir:—I gladly respond to your request to furnish an incident that may help to set forth the characteristics of our late distinguished fellow-citizen and neighbor, Mr. W. B. Ogden.

Perhaps there was no one feature of his character more marked than his wonderful power of attracting people to him. How great this power was, the following incident attests. As you are aware, Mr. Ogden spent some time abroad about the years 1856–7; in the course of his travels he met, and for a day or two traveled with, a Scotch lord, whom he so attracted as to bring from him, when a few years later Mr. Ogden was in somewhat stringent financial surroundings, the following note:

"My Dear Mr. Ogden:—I hear you are in trouble. I have placed to your credit in New York, £100,000. If you get through I know you will return it, if you don't, Jeanie [his wife] and I will never miss it."

This note, which Mr. Ogden read to me, I believe, on the day of its reception, so impressed me that I think I have given it nearly *verbatim*, except the names, which I don't remember.

Allow me, my dear sir, to express to you my thanks as a citizen for your efforts to preserve for coming generations the incidents in the life of one to whom Chicago owes so much.

Very truly yours,

Hon. I. N. Arnold, O. B. GREEN.
104 Pine Street.

Several of his friends in this country made similar offers. Among others, Mathew Laflin, of Chicago, sometimes said to be a close and penurious man, offered him $100,000. One would almost be willing to fail if it were the occasion of such exhibitions of friendship and confidence.

At the conclusion of the Memorial Address by Mr. Arnold, the Hon. Thomas Hoyne was called to the chair.

Whereupon, the Hon. E. B. Washburne said:

"MR. PRESIDENT:—I feel that I may be the interpreter of the sentiments of all the members of the Society, and all those who are present here tonight, in expressing the gratification and pleasure every one must have felt, in listening to the admirable memoir of Mr. Ogden, from the gifted and facile pen of our worthy President, Mr. Arnold. Nothing, in my judgment, can be more fitting than the tribute he has paid to Mr. Ogden. It is worthy of that distinguished man, who was so long and so honorably identified with Chicago, and who had left the impress of his name and character, not only on this City, but on the State and the North-West.

"I knew Mr. Ogden longer and better than any prominent business man in Chicago, during his time.

"The gracious gift to the Society, by his widow, of his splendid portrait, which now adorns these walls, where the cunning fingers of Chicago's most distinguished artist, Mr. Healy, have so faithfully delineated the marvelous features of the man, will be prized so long as the Society shall exist.

"Mr. Ogden was a man of education, intelligence, and refinement. As a business man, he had broad and enlightened views, a bold spirit, and unerring sagacity. Of courtly and polished manners, there is no society in the world he would not have adorned.

"As a conversationalist, I have hardly ever known his superior, or even his equal. If a public speaker is to be measured by results accomplished, there were but few men ever more happy or more successful. I have never known a man who could better address himself to the intelligence, the understanding, the judgment, and the sympathy of men, than Mr. Ogden. I had occasion to know how successfully he could move men. The audience have been told of his connection with the pioneer railroad of Chicago, the 'Galena and Chicago Union Rail-Road,' and all his contemporaries knew of the zeal and energy with which he entered into that work, destined to have such a vast influ-

ence on the future of Chicago and the State. It was in the first throes of that enterprise, strange as it may seem today, that Chicago turned to Galena and the Lead-mines for help, and that little city, then so full of enterprise, with its unrivalled business men, its merchants, its bankers, its lead-brokers, its miners, and its smelters, together with the neighboring villages, contributed more money in the first instance, if I mistake not, to the building of the road, than Chicago. It was the then '*Galena* and Chicago Union Rail-Road,' and now, alas! even the name does not exist!

"It was in a crisis in the affairs of the road that Mr. Ogden, the president, with some other Chicago gentlemen, appeared at Galena, to solicit additional subscriptions to the stock of the road, and raise money to go forward with the work. Great interest was felt in the road all through the mining region, and meetings were called, not only at Galena, but at Hard Scrabble, New Diggings, and Schullsburg, to consider the subject, and to be addressed by Mr. Ogden. I attended all of these meetings, and I never heard so effective speeches as those made by him. A master of the whole subject, he presented all the considerations so fully, so clearly, and so intelligently, as to carry conviction home to every mind, resulting in subscriptions to be paid in gold and silver, for that was then the currency of the mining region, to an extent that not only amazed our Chicago friends, but surprised the Galena people, who thought they knew something of the wealth of the lead-mining region at that time.

"The Galenians of that day will always hold the memory of Mr. Ogden in respect. In the difficulties which grew up afterwards in the Board of Directors of the Company, and which resulted in the most grievous wrong to Galena that was ever inflicted on any town, and which proved a great misfortune for the Company, Mr. Ogden always stood by Galena, and fair play, and honest faith. Notwithstanding all the money and influence Galena contributed to the work, in the hour of its weakness and trial, the road never reached there. Instead of being pushed forward to its destination, and becoming the pioneer road to the Mississippi, it made its terminus at Freeport, where it remains today, a reminder of a colossal mistake, such as

was rarely ever made, even in the case of a corporation. For Mr. Ogden's course in that matter, as well as for the high respect in which I have always held him, I am glad to join in this tribute to his memory."

At the conclusion of his remarks, Mr. Washburne offered the following resolutions, which were seconded by Julian S. Rumsey, and unanimously adopted, to wit:

"RESOLVED, That the sincere and grateful thanks of the Chicago Historical Society be and are hereby tendered to Mrs. Marianna A. Ogden, for the splendid portrait, by Healy, of her husband, the late Hon. William B. Ogden, a former member and officer of the Society.

"RESOLVED, That the said portrait shall be hung in the rooms of the Society, where it shall ever be treasured as a *souvenir* of Mr. Ogden, as a liberal and enlightened patron of the Society.

"RESOLVED (further), That the Secretary of the Society be directed to transmit the above resolutions to Mrs. Ogden.

"RESOLVED, That the thanks of the Society be hereby tendered to the Hon. Isaac N. Arnold, the President of the Society, for the very able, interesting, and instructive memoir of the late Hon. William B. Ogden, former member and officer of this Society, read before it this evening; and also to E. H. Sheldon, for his very appropriate remarks.

"RESOLVED, That Messrs. Arnold and Sheldon be requested to deposit the same in the archives of the Society, and also furnish copies for publication."

Isaac N. Arnold

WESTERN ENGRAVING CO CHICAGO

J. Young Scammon

WILLIAM B. OGDEN.

BY J. YOUNG SCAMMON.

[1857.] WILLIAM B. OGDEN is a native of Delaware County, N.Y. He was born in the town of Walton, on June 15th, 1805. He is of the well-known Ogden family of Eastern New Jersey. His grandfather was in the Revolutionary War. His father, Abraham Ogden, when eighteen years old, left Morristown, N. J., soon after the close of that war, intending to settle in the new city of Washington, the future capital of the United States. He had proceeded on his journey as far as Philadelphia, when he met a brother or relative of his friend, the late Governor Mahlon Dickerson of New Jersey, who gave him such a glowing account of the Upper Delaware country, and of the immense forests of pine timber upon the banks of that river, promising great prospective wealth from its accessibility to the Philadelphia market, that he was induced to accompany Mr. Dickerson to that then wilderness country, where he finally settled, and passed a life of active usefulness, engaged in such employments as were best suited to develop and build up the home of his adoption. He was regarded as a man of sound judgment and good business tact. He was social and domestic, yet fond of reading, and very hospitable in his disposition. His advice was sought and valued, especially by those younger than himself. His active usefulness was much impaired by a stroke of paralysis in 1820. He died in 1825.

The mother of William B. Ogden was a daughter of an officer of the Revolutionary War, James Weed of New Canaan, Fairfield County, Connecticut. Mr. Weed seems to have been very patriotic, or somewhat military in his character, for we find him, at the early age of fourteen, volunteering in the "French War," as that great conflict between Gt. Britain and France, for supremacy on this continent, was called. It began in 1754, and terminated triumphantly for our mother country in 1760. It was a fearful struggle, which aroused the feelings of all the colonists, both British and French. Its extent can easily be appreciated, when we read that "The spring of 1758 saw, on American soil, an army of 50,000 men,—22,000 British regulars and 28,000 provincials, or British American colonists, to fight France and her colonists in America.

At the termination of the Revolutionary struggle, like most of his brother officers, he was out of cash and out of business. Several of these officers, including Mr. Weed, determined to colonize and settle upon and around a "patent" of land which one of their number held upon the Delaware River. This land was a primitive forest, west of the Catskill Mountains, eighty miles (those were not railroad days) beyond the Hudson, and sixty miles beyond the then western frontier or any carriage road. It was a great undertaking; yet these brave men had the courage to seek an independent home with their families in the wilderness. In 1790-92, they took their families, upon pack-horses, to their forest homes; established a settlement in that "Sequestered Section" of the State, as it was afterward called by Governor Clinton, where, though remarkable for neither numbers nor wealth, patriotism found a home, amid dignified courtesy and genuine hospitality. The society formed and developed through the influence of these pioneers was distinguished through all the surrounding country no less for its general intelligence and intellectual cultivation, than for its moral and religious character. It was here that the parents of the subject of this sketch were married, and the earlier years of the latter were passed.

Allusion has not been made to the ancestors of Mr. Ogden from any feeling that worthy parentage can confer honor without

regard to the character of the offspring. The writer holds that such ancestry only adds to the dishonor of him who is not true to his inherited blood. But when worthy parentage is blessed and honored by corresponding qualities in the child, any biography of the latter is deficient, which does not acknowledge the indebtedness of its subject to its parent stock.

Mr. Ogden, when a lad, was large for his years. When not more than ten or twelve years old, he was very fond of athletic exercises, and the sports of robust boyhood. It was his delight to hunt, to swim, to skate, to wrestle, and to ride. These were the sports suited to his "Sequestered" home; and if they trespassed too much upon his time, it was from no indisposition to study, or want of fondness for books. He must have been very fond of these sports in his early youth, for he recollects that his father was obliged to limit his hunting and fishing excursions to two days in the week. As he grew older, the advice of his father awakened in him a consciousness of the necessity of greater application to books, and of the duty of preparing himself for the serious business of life. His father's counsels were not unheeded.

Permitted by his indulgent father to choose his future occupation, he determined to acquire a liberal education, and devote himself to the practice of law. No sooner had he made this determination, than, with the decision of character and that earnestness which have marked his subsequent career, he set to work to fit himself for his chosen profession. He had but little more than commenced his academic course, when the sudden prostration of his father's health required him, though only sixteen years of age, to return home, to take his father's place in the management of the latter's business, and the care of the family. It was with no little regret that the young Ogden bade adieu to the academic halls; but he could not hesitate between inclination and duty.

The management of his father's business exacted great activity and energy from its youthful conductor. It took him much over the country, and frequently to the large cities, and in these journeys he acquired that inclination for varied business pursuits which have rendered his subsequent life one of great activity.

Although this business required much attention, it did not absorb all his strength. He found opportunity to cultivate his mind by reading; and, being a ready observer, and his mind of a strong practical turn, he did not fail to profit by every tour he made. Travel proved to him, as it always does to persons of thought and observation, an efficient educator. It enlarged his views, expanded his thoughts, and increased his powers. At this time he had seen very little of the world. He was only twenty-one years of age, when he was induced to engage as a partner in a mercantile firm, and enlarge his operations. These were moderately successful, but did not satisfy his ambition. After spending a few years more in his native county, his unwearied exertions being rewarded by only moderate gains, he determined, in 1835, to turn his attention westward. He arrived at Chicago in June, 1835, having then recently united with friends in the purchase of real estate in this city. He and they foresaw that Chicago was to be a good town, and they purchased largely, including Wolcott's Addition, and nearly the half of Kinzie's Addition, and the block of land upon which the freight-houses of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad now stand, on the north side of the river, which was then supposed to be the most promising business part of the town.

Before leaving his native State, at eighteen, the age at which military duty was required of young men, Mr. Ogden was duly enrolled in the militia, and elected a commissioned officer the first day of doing duty; and on the second was appointed Aid to his esteemed friend, Brig.-General Frederic P. Foote, a gallant and polished gentleman, long since deceased. Selah R. Hobbie, for many years a distinguished Assistant-Postmaster-General of the United States, and from boyhood the intimate friend of Mr. Ogden, was at that time a member of General Foote's Staff, as Brigade Inspector, with the rank of Major. Mr. Ogden succeeded Major Hobbie, as Brigade Inspector, and discharged the duties of that office for several years.

In General Jackson's time, Mr. Ogden was made Postmaster of his village (Walton), and so remained until after his removal to Chicago.

The year before coming to Chicago (1834), he was elected to the Legislature of the State of New York, especially to aid in promoting the construction of the New York and Erie Railroad, and to obtain the aid of the State for that great work, in which he felt a deep interest. He spent the winter of 1834-5 in the Assembly at Albany, and the following year the State granted the aid for which he had most ardently labored.

He selected Chicago as his place of residence, because of its prominent position at the head of Lake Michigan, or rather, because of its being the western terminus of lake navigation.

His attention had been more particularly drawn to it by his brother-in-law, Charles Butler, and his friend, Arthur Bronson of New York, both of whom had visited Chicago, in 1833, and made purchases here.

At first, Mr. Ogden's principal business in Chicago was the management of the real estate which he and his friends had purchased; but gradually, and almost accidentally in the beginning, he established a Land and Trust Agency, which he carried on in his own name from 1836 to 1843, when it had so increased that he associated with himself the late Wm. E. Jones. Since then the business has been carried on successively by Ogden, Jones & Co., Ogden, Fleetwood & Co., and Ogden, Sheldon & Co., in which last name it is still managed by his successors. The business became so large that it may be called one of the historical institutions of Chicago.

Mr. Ogden was very successful in his operations, and the house was well known, from 1835 to '36; but he became embarrassed in 1837-8, by assuming liabilities for friends, several of whom he endeavored to aid, with but partial success. He struggled on with these embarrassments for several years. Finally, in 1842-3, Mr. Ogden escaped from the last of them; and his career of pecuniary success was subsequently unclouded. After the panic of 1837, there were gloomy days throughout the whole country, and especially in the West, until 1857, as related in a subsequent portion of this sketch. In Illinois, the old internal improvement system went by the board, and the canal drew its slow length

along, until operations upon it were finally suspended, leaving the State comparatively nothing to show for the millions squandered in "internal improvements."

Mr. Ogden's operations in real estate have been immense. He has sold real estate for himself and others to an amount exceeding ten millions of dollars, requiring many thousand deeds and contracts which he had personally signed. Previous to 1857, the sales of his house equalled nearly one million of dollars per annum. In real estate improvements he made many rough places smooth, and the crooked ways straight. More than one hundred miles of streets, and hundreds of bridges at street corners, besides several other bridges, including two over the Chicago River, were made by him, at the private expense of himself and clients, and at a cost of probably hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Mr. Ogden's mind is of a very practical character. He designed and built the first floating swing-bridge over the Chicago River, on Clark Street, (he had then never seen one elsewhere). It answered well its designed purpose. He was early engaged in introducing into extensive use in the West, McCormick's reaping and mowing machines, and building up the first large factory for their manufacture. In this manufactory, during his connection with it, and at his suggestion, was built the first reaper sent to England, which, at the great London Exhibition of 1851 did so much for the credit of American practical inventive genius.

He was a contractor upon the Illinois and Michigan Canal, and his efforts to prevent its suspension, and to resuscitate and complete it, were untiring.

There is no brighter page in Mr. Ogden's history than that which records his devotion to the preservation of the public credit. The first time that we recollect to have heard him address a public meeting was in the autumn of 1837, while he held the office of mayor. Some frightened debtors, assisted by a few demagogues, had called a meeting to take measures to have the courts suspended, or some way devised by which the compulsory fulfilment of their engagements might be deferred beyond that period, so tedious to creditors, known as the "law's

delay." They sought by legislative action, or "relief laws," to virtually suspend, for a season, the collection of debts. An inflammatory and *ad captandum* speech had been made. The meeting, which was composed chiefly of debtors, seemed quite excited, and many were rendered almost desperate by the recital, by designing men, of their sufferings and pecuniary danger. During the excitement, the Mayor was called for. He stepped forward, and exhorted his fellow-citizens not to commit the folly of proclaiming their own dishonor. He besought those of them who were embarrassed, to bear up against adverse circumstances with the courage of men, remembering that no misfortune was so great as one's own personal dishonor. That it were better for them to conceal their misfortunes than to proclaim them; reminding them that many a fortress had saved itself by the courage of its inmates, and their determination to conceal its weakened condition, when, if its real state had been made known, its destruction would have been inevitable and immediate. "Above all things," said he, "do not tarnish the honor of our infant city."

To the credit of Chicago, be it said, this first attempt at "repudiating relief" met, from a majority of that meeting, and from our citizens, a rebuff no less pointed than deserved; and those who attempted it merited contempt.

Since then has our State needed all the exertions of its truest and most faithful citizens to repel the insidious approaches of the demon of repudiation. When Mississippi repudiated, and Illinois could not pay, and with many sister States had failed to meet her interest, there were not wanting political Catalines to raise the standard of repudiation in Illinois. The State seemed almost hopelessly in debt; and the money for this immense indebtedness, except so much as had been expended upon the canal, had been wasted, chiefly in the partial construction of disconnected pieces of railroads, which were of no value to the State or people.

The State was bankrupt, and private insolvency was rather the rule than the exception. Many were discouraged by their misfortunes, some of the hopeless were leaving the State on account of its embarrassments, and immigration was repelled by fear of

enormous taxation. Then it was that the wily demagogue sought to beguile the simple and unsuspecting, and to preach the doctrine of repudiation as a right, because "no value had been received" for the money which our public creditors had loaned us, and on account of the hopelessness and utter impossibility of our ever paying our indebtedness. Mr. Ogden then, though his party in its State Convention refused to adopt a resolution which was submitted, "repudiating repudiation," in common with the great mass of his northern fellow-citizens, did not hesitate to proclaim the inviolable nature of our public faith, and the necessity of doing our utmost to meet our obligations, and redeem the credit of our noble State.

In politics, Mr. Ogden, though not much of a partisan, has always been a democrat of the Madisonian school. He has not hesitated to oppose the nominations of his party when, in his opinion, the public interest required it. He has often been in the City Council, and frequently solicited to be a candidate for official positions. He was nominated in 1840, by the canal party, for the Legislature, and in 1852, by the Free Democracy, for Congress. This last nomination he declined. In the recent struggle, he was found with freedom's hosts, in support of the nominees of the Republican party, believing, in common with the great mass of the North, that the encroachments of slavery upon territory dedicated to freedom by the plighted faith of the nation, must be resisted; and that the "principles promulgated in the Declaration of Independence, and embodied in the Federal Constitution, are essential to the preservation of our republican institutions."

Mr. Ogden is a man of great public spirit, and in enterprise unsurpassed. To recapitulate the public undertakings which have commanded his attention, and received his countenance and support, would be to catalogue most of those in this section of the Northwest. He has been a leading man—president or director, or a large stockholder—in so many public bodies or corporations, that we shall not undertake to make a list of them. Among the prominent places he has occupied, we recollect the following:

In 1837, at the first election under the city charter, he was

chosen Mayor. He was the first and for many years the President of Rush Medical College, the first institution of that kind in Chicago. He was President of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad Co., from its resuscitation in 1847, until its construction, in part, and earnings had raised its stock to a premium, when he resigned. He was President of the National Pacific Railroad Convention of 1850, held in Philadelphia; of the Illinois and Wisconsin Railroad Company; of the Buffalo and Mississippi Railroad Company, in Indiana, until merged in the Michigan Central; of the Chicago Branch of the State Bank of Illinois, at Chicago; and President of the Board of Sewerage Commissioners for the City of Chicago.

It was Mr. Ogden who first started the resuscitation and building of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad. He negotiated for the purchase of the charter and assets of the Company, of the proprietors in New York, in 1847, and was the first President of the Company. He was indefatigable in his exertions to commend the enterprise to public attention, and secure its commencement and energetic construction. But for his exertions, and those of J. Y. Scammon, it could not have started when it did. It was their exertions, in the country and in Chicago, that obtained the necessary subscriptions to justify the commencement of the undertaking. Without them, it would not have moved for years.

In 1853-4, Mr. Ogden visited Europe, and was away from Chicago for about a year and a half. He was an accurate observer there, as well as elsewhere, of men and things. The institutions and great public works of Europe did not escape his attention, and some of them were carefully examined by him. It was the canals of Holland, and especially the great ship-canal at Amsterdam, that first suggested to him the practicability, as well as importance and necessity of a channel for the free flow of the waters of Lake Michigan, through the Chicago and Desplaines Rivers, into the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, in aid of navigation in those streams; and at the same time furnishing free, direct, and unbroken steamboat navigation between the Mississippi River and all its tributaries and Chicago. He doubtless then foresaw the necessity of a deep outlet from Chicago River southward. His

letters from Europe were published in the *Chicago Democratic Press* at the time, and attracted attention to this great subject, which at this day excites so much interest. While in Europe, Mr. Ogden gave attention, also, to works of art, and purchased quite a number of pictures and articles of *virtu*, many of them the productions of American artists of merit abroad, and which not only adorned his mansion, but did credit to their producers, and were valuable contributions for the improvement and gratification of the public taste in this new world.

Mr. Ogden is a man of commanding presence, and most agreeable manners—of extensive general information, and cultivated taste. We have never known a more amiable or gentlemanly man in intercourse with others. His strong practical sense and great presence of mind made him at home almost everywhere. He was rarely at a loss. Although his education had not been such as to make him a *belles-lettres* scholar, or an accomplished orator, he wrote well, and was always listened to with attention when he addressed an audience; and few, if any men, exerted more influence in a public body, upon any practical subject, than he.

As a traveling companion, we have never seen his equal. His prudence and foresight, and his love of doing the agreeable to others, relieved his *compagnons de voyage* of all care. It was natural for him to love to aid others. It afforded him great satisfaction to be of service to his friends. Amidst the pressure of his enormous business, he found time to relieve the distressed and to aid the deserving; and many a family in Chicago, who are now basking in prosperity, owe their success to his kind assistance; many a poor widow and orphan have been preserved from want by his care and foresight.

Mr. Ogden is now immensely rich; yet he retains the same fondness for enterprise, the same love for building roads, and developing the country, which have characterized his previous life. He is now President of the Chicago, St. Paul & Fond du Lac Railroad Company, and of the Wisconsin and Superior Land Grant Railroad Company; and, under his auspices, Chicago will, ere long, in all probability, be brought into direct communication

with Lake Superior; and should he live long enough, we should not be surprised to see him building the Northwestern Railroad to the Pacific Ocean.

Mr. Ogden has never married. In 1837, he built a delightful residence, in the centre of a beautiful lot, thickly covered with fine native growth forest trees, and surrounded by four streets, in that part of the city called North Chicago; and there, when not absent from home, he indulges in that hospitality which is, at the same time, so cheering to his friends and so agreeable to himself.

* * * * * *

[1867.] The original of the preceding sketch of the life of our late eminent townsman was written and published in 1857. In continuing it to the present date, we but recount the history of Chicago and the Northwest for the last ten years.

Impelled by his love of public improvements, and desire to develop the great West, Mr. Ogden, during the year 1857, was pushing forward with all his energy the construction of the Chicago, St. Paul and Fond du Lac Railroad, two sections of which, from Chicago to Janesville, and twenty-eight miles from Fond du Lac south, were completed and in operation when the memorable financial crisis of that year swept over this country and the commercial world, upsetting many of the strongest commercial houses, and producing general embarrassment in all the business enterprises of the land. The Fond du Lac (the original of the Chicago and Northwestern) Railroad was carrying a large floating debt, pending a sale of its mortgage bonds, and the negotiations abroad suddenly failing, in the crash the paper of the company went to protest. Upon this paper, Mr. Ogden was endorser to the extent of nearly a million and a half of dollars, and was consequently called upon to provide for the payment of this large sum. With his usual energy he set about the Herculean task. These were days of trial, requiring fortitude and good judgment. Aided by the advice and confidence of such friends as William A. Booth, President of the American Exchange Bank, Caleb O. Halsted, President of the Manhattan Company, and his counsellor, Samuel J. Tilden, of New York, he made an exhibit of his

affairs, and was allowed by the creditors of the road to continue in its control, and arrange and liquidate its paper, according to his own judgment; and through the assets of the Company, and the free use of a large portion of his private estate, he succeeded ere long in retiring all the paper of the Company upon which he was endorser. It is due to our common humanity that we should here acknowledge several acts of confidence and good-will, so noble as to deserve especial mention.

The house of which Mr. Ogden was the head at Chicago, had for many years been the agents of Samuel Russell, of Middletown, Connecticut, a wealthy retired merchant, the founder of the well-known house of Russell & Co., of Canton, India. Immediately upon learning that his friend was embarrassed, Mr. Russell wrote to Mr. Ogden's partner at Chicago, to place his entire estate in their hands, amounting to nearly a half million of dollars, at Mr. Ogden's disposal. Robert Eaton, of Swansea, in Wales, an English gentleman of wealth and cultivation, at once sent to Mr. Ogden eighty thousand dollars to use in his discretion. Our well-known citizen, Matthew Laflin, wrote from Saratoga, where he was sojourning, and tendered, from himself and friends, a hundred thousand dollars; and Colonel E. D. Taylor, long an enterprising citizen of Chicago, repeatedly tendered like substantial aid. Although this princely liberality was not accepted, we can readily understand how gratifying it must have been to Mr. Ogden, and how such exhibitions of confidence and esteem at such a time cheered and encouraged him in his trying and difficult position. The responsibility which he had assumed for the road was not prompted, mainly or solely, by the prospect of private gain. Others had a larger pecuniary interest in the road than he, and others in Chicago had as large an indirect interest as he in the extension of the road, and the development of the country, and of the city of his adoption. Undaunted by the reverses which had overtaken him, and confidently forecasting the future in a large mould, he did not hesitate, before he had retired all the paper of the road upon which he was endorser, to push the railway toward completion. In the summer of 1859, he undertook the construction of sixty miles of the road from Janesville

northward, to connect the two sections of the line already in operation, and this was accomplished in the then unprecedented time of fifty-eight working days. The failure of the road, in 1857, involved its sale and re-organization, after which it took the name of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, and, under this title, Mr. Ogden and his friends continued to push on the line toward Lake Superior, competing for the trade of the Northwest. The old Galena road was seeking for the same trade, and each company was projecting competing lines through territory already supplied with facilities for transportation. He thought this policy injurious to both interests, and that neither the trade and commerce of Chicago, nor the great region lying beyond the points then reached by the roads, were being developed and benefited in a degree at all commensurate with the capital likely to be expended. He thought that by a concentration of interests, mutually beneficial to the stockholders, it would be possible for Chicago, through these roads, and to their profit, to speedily put herself in communication, by rail, with Lake Superior to the North, St. Paul and Minnesota to the Northwest, and the Missouri River, with the boundless region and resources to the West. Moved by these considerations, in the winter of 1864, Mr. Ogden projected the purchase of the Galena Railroad; and this being accomplished by himself and a few friends, the two rival interests were consolidated at the next annual election. The Directors of the Galena Company having, after the retirement of Messrs. Ogden and Scammon, very foolishly and cowardly, some years previously, abandoned to the Illinois Central their line from Freeport to Galena, and thus parted with the great Northwestern terminal artery of their road, the word "Galena" was dropped at the consolidation as a future *misnomer*, and thenceforward that line took the name of its younger and more enterprising rival. The wisdom of this movement has been more than vindicated by results already accomplished.

At an early day, Mr. Ogden was interested in securing railroad connections for our city with the East—at first by the Michigan Central, and subsequently by the Michigan Southern road. On the organization of the Fort Wayne and Chicago Company, in

1853, he became a Director, and ever after, we believe, continued his active interest in that enterprise. The line to Pittsburg then embraced three distinct companies, all weak and all engaged, with limited means and credit, in the work of construction. He regarded a grand trunk line, under one management, from Chicago to Pittsburg, as essential to a valuable business connection with the latter city, as well as with Philadelphia. The roads were subsequently united, but, wanting the strength of a completed line, the enterprise was forced to succumb to the pressure of the times, and in 1859, steps were taken for the appointment of Receivers —and a Sequestrator was appointed in Pennsylvania, and a Receiver in Ohio. A want of harmony in the several States seemed likely to end in ruinous litigation, and in defeating the project for a grand trunk line, or at least suspending it indefinitely. This would have been a great misfortune to Chicago; would have involved large losses on the line, not to individuals only, but to counties which had subscribed largely to the stock. The danger was so imminent that a general meeting of stock and bondholders, as well as creditors, was convened at Pittsburg. We have been informed by gentlemen, who were present on that occasion, that the sagacity and discretion of Mr. Ogden were never more strikingly illustrated than on this occasion. He had such a clear perception of what was certain to follow division and strife on the one hand, and of the favorable results sure to be attained by harmony and coöperation on the other, and he spoke with such earnestness and power that he succeeded, to the surprise of his friends, in reconciling the conflicting parties. The plan which he urged with so much force, provided for preserving existing preferences and priorities, sacrificed no interest, but created a new or reorganized company, composed of holders of bonds, stockholders, and creditors, all sharing equally in the future control and management of the road. The adoption of it involved the appointment of a Receiver for the whole line, pending the proceedings which were necessary to carry out the project. The Receivership was at once tendered to Mr. Ogden, at a salary of $25,000 per annum, with entire unanimity. This he was forced to decline, as he was already overburdened with his private affairs, and his

health seriously impaired. It was found difficult, if not impossible, to unite upon any other name, and after again and again declining, he yielded to the solicitation of some of his personal friends, whose fortunes were largely involved, and accepted the position, although declining the large compensation proposed, as not warranted by the circumstances of the road. This action secured the reorganization on the plan proposed, and the completion of the line—and today it is one of the longest, most successful, and important roads in the country, with a daily connection between Chicago and New York and Philadelphia, without change of cars.

We have reverted to Mr. Ogden's early interest in a railroad to the Pacific. When the Company was organized under the Act of Congress, incorporating the Union Pacific Railroad Company, Mr. Ogden was chosen its first President. His accumulated business cares, however, induced him, subsequently, to retire from this position, although advising and coöperating in the construction of the road, and having an active interest in all that concerns it. He had an abiding faith that, ere many years should pass, a second road would be constructed to the Pacific, on what is known as the Northern route, or the Northern Pacific road.

His practical mind and enterprising spirit have led him into great and varied undertakings. In 1856, he became interested in a large lumbering establishment on the Peshtigo River, in Northern Wisconsin. To this estate he has been adding, from time to time, until the company which he organized, and of which he became principal owner, now has nearly two hundred thousand acres of pine lands, on which are extensive mills; a thriving village of several hundred inhabitants; a fine harbor, constructed on Green Bay, at the mouth of the Peshtigo River; and the company manufactures for the Chicago market some 40,000,000 feet of lumber annually.

In 1860, he purchased at Brady's Bend, on the Alleghany River, in Pennsylvania, an estate of 5000 acres, on which were extensive mines of iron and coal, rolling-mills and furnaces, and a village of some fifteen hundred inhabitants. Here, with some friends, who subsequently joined him, he organized the Brady's

Bend Iron Company, with a capital of $2,000,000, which employs some six hundred men, and makes two hundred tons of rails daily.

His business causing him, of late years, to spend much of his time in New York, he purchased a handsome villa, in the spring of 1866, in Westchester County, at Fordham Heights, adjoining the High Bridge. To this he has made some additions, so that he now has a farm of a hundred and ten acres, with a frontage of near half-a-mile on the Harlem River. It is known as Boscobel. He has recently enlarged and improved his old homestead at Chicago, where he still retains his residence, and at both of these establishments he continues to dispense that large-hearted hospitality for which his name has become almost a synonym.

Nearly every public institution in Chicago, including the Rush Medical College, the Theological Seminary of the Northwest, the Historical Society, the Academy of Sciences, the Astronomical Society, and the University of Chicago, are greatly indebted to him for timely aid. He is President of the Board of Trustees of the latter institution, and his presence at all meetings of the Board is welcomed by every friend of the University with great satisfaction.

We have previously alluded to Mr. Ogden's political life. Since the former sketch was written, he has mainly eschewed politics, and concentrated his energies upon internal improvements—his central idea being the growth and development of the great Northwest. Nevertheless, in 1860-1, he consented to accept from the Republican party a seat in the State Senate, where, though laboring under great anxiety on account of the disturbed condition of the country, and feeling under great apprehension as to the result of the threatened rebellion, he rendered good service to his constituents and the public in seeking in all things to promote the welfare of his adopted State, and increase the facilities for making Chicago, what it is destined to be, the great interior city of America.

He is a man of noble mould. We claim not that he is faultless, or free from the imperfections and failings of our common humanity; but as a man, a brother, a citizen, a public-spirited,

charitable, benevolent, and capable man, we acknowledge no superior. No other name in the Northwest calls up so many acknowledgments of public indebtedness for general benefits resulting from individual energy, enterprise, and ability, as that of William B. Ogden.

Former generations have commemorated the deeds of the worthy in monuments of bronze and marble. It is the glory of the nineteenth century, that general utility and the elevation and amelioration of the condition of all classes are its primary objects. In this century, men are to be measured and praised or censured by their works.

The public improvements of the Northwest, radiating from the home of his adoption, are noble monuments, commemorating in their usefulness both the character and enterprise of the subject of this memoir.

[1882.] In continuing the sketch of the biography of William B. Ogden, it is proper to say that so much of it as was written in 1857 or 1867 is republished with only slight alterations. We have preferred to reproduce the first two decades substantially as written, because they present the facts as seen from those periods. If some of the details appear trivial in the light of today, we must consider that the acts of men are great and important, not from their absolute, but their relative magnitude. In 1835, Chicago was a very muddy, straggling village, of about 1500 inhabitants. In 1837, when the first mayor was elected, it had only about 3500; and in 1847, when the first successful railroad enterprise, west of Lake Michigan, that of the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad, was earnestly and energetically entered upon, the population of this City was less than 17,000, and its assessed valuation did not amount to $6,000,000. There was no man in Chicago who could conveniently or was disposed to subscribe for more than $5000 in the stock of the Railroad Company, and the enterprise not only required faith and energy, but the soliciting of subscriptions from every person who could take even one share of its stock. The Galena Company had, in its early

day, 1800 stockholders of one share each,—all of its stock having been subscribed for as a public duty, and not as an investment.

In adding a third decade hereto, we have occasion to record both his marriage and his death. The first event was celebrated at Elmira, New York, on the 9th of February, 1875. The latter occurred at Boscobel, in Westchester County, New York, August 3d, 1877. Every man's life has three periods. Childhood, manhood, and old age succeed each other in the great march of life. We have sketched Mr. Ogden as a youth, and as an active, energetic business man—a cynosure in his new home in the West, building up and developing the future great Capital of the World. We here use no words of exaggeration, or indulge in flights of the imagination, or wild prophecies. We have lived our three score and ten years, forty-seven of them in Chicago, where we arrived in 1835, on the old steamer *Pennsylvania*, with William B. Ogden and the rest of the real-estate gentlemen who had been at Green Bay, to attend the first U. S. land sale, in what is now Wisconsin, but was then a part of the Territory of Michigan. Chicago was then a village of 1500 inhabitants, though claiming many more. It now has well nigh 600,000, and is more likely to have more than 1,000,000 in 1890, than less than that number. Whoever will look upon the map of this Continent, and see the position of Chicago relatively to the physical conformation of North America; its lake, river, and other water systems; its distribution of mountain and plain; of arable and waste land, can not fail to find the State of Illinois the great Central National State of North America, and Chicago its Commercial Capital.

It was William B. Ogden that was the first mayor of Chicago, and unquestionably not only its first citizen but the leading man of what has so long been known as the Northwest, but what is now the great granary of the country, and is to be in the future the great Central Region of North America.

We have never been reconciled to Mr. Ogden's leaving Chicago. It was here that he made the home of his most useful and efficient manhood, and imperishably engraved in its history, the evidences of his genius and creative force.

His record as a master-moving power among men necessarily

ceased its growth when he turned his eyes Eastward. His Star of Empire was in that growing, boundless West, which he did so much to develop, and upon the iron ways planned by him, upon which so many of the hardy immigrants from the old world find their way to new homes and abundance, under the ægis of Republican Institutions.

Rarely more than a generation of active, useful, pushing work is allotted to any man. At sixty years, forty years of manhood have been counted behind us, and we must now begin to rest from our labors.

That Mr. Ogden should, in his later years, have purchased a beautiful and enchanting villa on the sunny banks of the Hudson, amidst flowers and fruit, and make it his residence and the home of his married life, was most natural. His whole life had been incessantly active, and of late years, his railroad and other financial connections compelled him to have an office in New York City, and to spend much time there. He had married as his wife, Miss Mary Anna Arnot, daughter of Judge John Arnot, of Elmira, New York, a man as distinguished for push and business energy and ability in his section of the world as Mr. Ogden in Chicago. His wife partook largely of the business tact, judgment, and capabilities of her father, and nothing could be more compatible with the tastes and conditions of the new household than the residence at Boscobel, in the immediate vicinity of the financial centre of the country.

Mr. Ogden may have well felt loath to return to the West after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. With his other numerous buildings, every vestige of his Chicago home, which, when erected in 1837, was the finest in Chicago, and ever after, until its destruction, distinguished for its hospitality, both to residents and visitants from abroad, had disappeared. As soon as he could set his affairs, demanding his personal attention in the West, in order and promising activity, he married his wife, and thenceforth became only a citizen of New York. But his interests in Chicago and the Northwest remained, and though a new generation had succeeded or were replacing the early settlers, his memory remains in the history of his acts.

He was always a liberal, public-spirited gentleman. In all those great qualities of humanity, in which the positions of men are always determined by their sympathies with human brotherhood and progressive humanity, his heart was always with the people, who are many, rather than with the favored few. His hand and his purse were open to aid his kind. While his active business engagements required the entire use of his current money, he was ever ready with name and means to aid every enterprise or institution demanded for the general good or advancement of the community. He administered upon his estate, in this way, to a generous extent, while living, and never lagged behind any of his associates in such enterprises. When the Chicago Historical Society was about erecting its fine edifice, which was destroyed in the Great Fire, the two gentlemen in the north division of the City, where the building was to be built, who would have been naturally expected to contribute more liberally than others toward defraying the expense of its erection, were Walter L. Newberry and William B. Ogden, whose residences were in the immediate neighborhood of the building. They were both old citizens of Chicago, and had largely made their wealth by the rise of Chicago real estate. They were fellow-passengers with the writer from the Green Bay Land Sale in 1835, and he has known them well ever since, and they were his associates in the foundation and maintenance of the Chicago Historical Society. Mr. Newberry had been elected President of the Society, on the occurring of a vacancy, in the expectancy, as he had evinced great interest in the location of the building in his own neighborhood, that he would contribute largely if not wholly to defray the cost of the building. He would not have been chosen but for this expectancy. Both of these gentlemen made contributions, as did other gentlemen. Mr. Ogden's was not only liberal, but he offered to add $5000 to it, and as much more as Mr. Newberry would, even to the entire cost of the building.

Mr. Ogden, as stated in the previous part of this paper, was with the Free-Soilers in 1848, and though it is true, as intimated in a recent publication by Mr. Henry H. Hurlbut, that he was not a stockholder in the "Underground Railroad," or engaged in

running the same, nor a member of the original Abolition or old Liberty Party, the insinuation in that publication that "The Ogdens in particular stood aloof from the unpopular" Anti-Slavery movement is entirely unauthorized by the facts. They and all their associates, so far as the writer recollects, and he knew them intimately, were always Anti-Slavery men, but, like many others, they thought that they could better serve the cause of freedom by exerting their influence within their respective parties until the period should be ripe for a successful effort to win victory in a new organization. The insinuation that it was financial success that caused any of these gentlemen to recognize or assist in the benevolent work of aiding in freeing the oppressed slave, is unworthy of a place in the "Chicago Antiquities."

No man in Chicago has assisted poor and unfortunate persons, of all colors, in business and otherwise, more than W. B. Ogden.

From the writer's standpoint, he was too early rather than too late in abandoning the political party of his youth for a new organization in 1848. He was an active leader in the Free-Soil canvass of that year, supporting VanBuren and Adams, and being himself one of the Senatorial Candidates for Electors of President.

The writer has not sought to eulogize Mr. Ogden. He has not always agreed with him in politics or in other matters, and if he did not recognize his faults, failings, or imperfections, he would lack in honest candor. He adopts, in writing biographical sketches, the candor so forcibly expressed by Hildreth in his History of the United States of America, from the Discovery of the Continent to the Organization of Government under the Federal Constitution. Mr. Hildreth says:

"Of Centennial sermons and Fourth-of-July orations, whether professedly such or in the guise of history, there are more than enough. It is due to our fathers and ourselves, it is due to truth and philosophy, to present for once, on the historic stage, the founders of our American Nation, unbedaubed with patriotic rouge, wrapped up in no fine-spun cloaks of excuses and apology, without stilts, buskins, tinsel, or bedizenment, in their own proper persons. * * * The result of their labors is eulogy enough; their best apology is to tell their story exactly as it was."

Mr. Ogden not only administered upon his estate in part as he went along, but in his Final Testament, fair-haired, modest charity was not forgotten. The eighth clause of his will, in providing for the distribution of the income of his estate, reads as follows:

"To such charitable uses as I shall hereafter designate without the solemnity of a will, or, in default of such designation, as a majority of my said executors and trustees may select and appoint, the remaining one and a-half shares, or seven and one-half per centum, of said income or distributable moneys," etc. And a like appropriation is made on the final distribution of his estate. Under the afore-mentioned provision, his executors have already paid over to the trustees of a hospital to be under the management of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses, at Chicago, organized by the Rev. W. A. Passivant, $25,000.

When the first part of this paper was written, and mention was made of the great services of Mr. Ogden as the Pioneer-Railroad man of the Northwest from Chicago, railroads were built as public enterprises, and not as money-making speculations. They were regarded as great highways constructed by the people, either at the expense of the Government or by means of private capital, to accommodate the public, and not for the especial benefit of the stockholders. The Galena and Chicago Union Railroad was the pioneer of all that immense railroad system which radiates west, north, and south from Chicago, and upon the success of that enterprise, as a precedent, depended, in the opinion of its projectors and first managers, the early extension of other and more distant lines. To raise the money to start the Road required great effort, and Mr. Ogden and the writer of this sketch, though by no means the only persons who, from patriotic motives or considerations of the general good of the community, took an active interest in promoting that enterprise were its special advocates, and among the largest, and before the stock rose to par, the largest stockholders in this Road after its resuscitation. A commencement had been made in 1837, but the panic of that year suspended the work before a single mile of it had been completed, or fairly underway.

In the winter of 1847, a convention was held at Rockford, the half-way house between Chicago and Galena, to favor the work. There was a large meeting, attended by persons from Galena to Chicago. Thomas Drummond, then residing at Galena, presided over the assembly. The late William H. Brown, always a director and subsequently a president of the Galena Company and of the Chicago Historical Society; with Benjamin W. Raymond, our ever public-spirited citizen, and more than once mayor of the City, and a director of the road till it merged in the Northwestern, and who still remains among us to witness and rejoice with others over the success of his faithful public efforts, was among the active men there. Isaac N. Arnold, so long and favorably known in the politics of Illinois, and as a representative in the late War Congress of the United States, and long a leader at the Chicago Bar, now President of the Chicago Historical Society, and devoting the calm of mature years to literary work—with Gen. Hart L. Stewart, one of Chicago's oldest citizens, whose whole life has been spent in building public works west of Lake Erie—in Michigan, upon the Illinois and Michigan Canal and elsewhere—and in the public councils of the State or official positions under the Government—rode in the same carriage with the writer, and were active participants in the work of the convention, as was Thomas D. Robertson, of Rockford, for many years a director of the Road.

We were two days on our journey each way, spending the night at Elgin, then a little hamlet, now a thriving city of 13,000 inhabitants. The landlord there told us he was against railroads. They were bad things for farmers and hotel-keepers, but good for "big fellows at the ends of the road." He "intended to make money while the road was building, and then sell out and go beyond them." He declared that Elgin would cease to be a place of business as soon as the railroad went beyond it.

The meeting was harmonious and quite unanimous in its action; the only exception being a tavern-keeper at Marengo, who, fearing that his business would be injured by the road, appeared with his friends in the convention and denounced railroads as "undemocratic aristocratic institutions that would ride

rough-shod over the people and grind them to powder." "The only roads," said he, "that the people want are good common or plank-roads, upon which everybody can travel."

In the fall of 1847, Mr. Ogden and the writer traveled the entire distance from Chicago to Galena together, stopping at all the principal intermediate places, making speeches for the Road, and going into the highways to compel men to come in and help the enterprise, even if they could not take more than a single share of stock. Many farmers and other persons, be it said to their credit, did come forward and subscribe, though they had to borrow the first instalment of two dollars and fifty cents on a share, and get trusted "till after harvest" for the same. Mr. Ogden was in his element in such enterprises. His go-a-headativeness here gave full play to his imagination, and filled not only himself, but his hearers with high hopes and generous courage. When it is remembered that it cost five bushels of wheat, and often from four days' to a week's journey to Chicago, with a load of grain, to get the first instalment of a single or few shares of stock, none can doubt the public interest in the enterprise.

At Galena, business men and bankers were fearful of the effect of the Railroad upon their town. Among its chief advocates there were Judge Drummond, C. M. Hempstead, Elihu B. Washburne, and Thos. Hoyne. Galena had long been a very prosperous town at the head of navigation on Fever River, and the great lead-mining centre and mercantile distributor for Northwest Illinois and Southwest Wisconsin, and the country north in the mines.

The great obstacles we met there were two; one the local effect upon the town, and the other the fear that before the Road should be completed, the enterprise would break down, the small stockholders sacrificed, and the Road pass into the hands of the large capitalists. We had to meet these objections by the promise to respect and protect the local interests of Galena, to whose capital we were much indebted in starting the work, and a pledge that until the stock rose to par, and was saleable at that price, we would never allow the work to proceed faster than its ready means would justify without endangering the capital invested.

This promise was faithfully kept so long as these two persons

remained in the directory. It has been said in justification of the abandoning of the west end of the line to the Illinois Central Railroad, that Galena was doomed, and a different course could not have saved it. The writer dissents from this proposition, and believes that if the pledges Mr. Ogden and he made at Galena had been faithfully, energetically, and courageously carried out, Galena would have been greatly benefited, and its importance and business permanently advanced. But whether this opinion be correct or not, Galena was a pioneer in the work, and the Company had no right to sell her birthright to the Illinois Central Company. It would not have been done had the two most active directors, who were among the largest subscribers to the stock, when the Company was reorganized in the writer's office, at the southeast corner of Lake and Clark Streets, in the old Saloon Building in the City of Chicago, in 1847, remained in their positions in its management.

In a paper read before the Chicago Historical Society, by Mr. Arnold, its President, December 20, 1881, on the occasion of the presentation, by Mrs. Ogden, of a portrait of her late husband, it is said "the officers of the Road, after he [Mr. Ogden] had been compelled to retire, had received a public dinner (I think at Elgin) in which they drank toasts to each other and everybody except Mr. Ogden. The omission of his name, the man who everyone knew had built the Road, only made him the more prominent."

If such an occasion took place, the occasion must have been more marked by the absence of the original and most efficient projectors of the Road than their presence. There were officers in the Road that were engaged in speculating along its line, as was confessed some years later, when one of them was made a scapegoat.

Public allusion having been thus made to these personal troubles in the Board of Directors, it becomes proper to explain the same somewhat, as in doing so a trait in Mr. Ogden's character and conduct presents him in very bold and advantageous relief, when compared with that of some of his associates.

Chicago at that time was a comparatively small and very

ambitious city. It had three divisions, occasioned by the River and its North and South Branches, which run almost at right angles with the main river, leaving east of them the North and South Divisions, and west of them the West Division, extending the whole length of the City. Such divisions always create local jealousies, and the selfish interests excited are often difficult to manage or control. Mr. Ogden resided on the north side of the River, as did four other directors, Walter L. Newberry, Thomas Dyer, and John B. Turner. Two, Thomas Drummond and Charles S. Hempstead, lived in Galena, and one, Thomas D. Robertson, in Rockford, while the six others, Benjamin W. Raymond, George Smith, Charles Walker, James H. Collins, and J. Young Scammon lived in the South Division, which was then, as now, the principal business and commercial portion of the town.

Mr. Ogden being especially identified with the North-Side could not exercise as much influence in obtaining subscriptions to stock in the business portion of the town as some of the South-Side directors, as he was accused, by those who never suppose other than solely selfish motives can influence action, of "wanting to build a railroad that would never pay, to help him sell his lots." The gentleman on the North-Side naturally desired the road to cross the North Branch, and locate its depots or stations in the North Division; while the West-Siders could see no necessity of expending money to cross the River, because the West Side was the largest division of the City, and the nearest to the country.

In the railroad work, either because Ogden and Scammon had more time to devote to it, or for some other reason, they became the specially active representatives of the Road on their respective sides of the River. The out-of-town directors could rarely attend its meetings, or only when very important questions demanded their presence.

These two men gave very much of their time to the enterprise; Mr. Ogden receiving a small salary in stock, and the writer no compensation, except for legal services when required by the Board. Ogden and Scammon traveled over the country together; visited Albany and Boston in the interests of the Road in com-

pany with the late Erastus Corning, then President of the New York Central Railroad and the controlling spirit in the Michigan Central, the only road then in operation west of Lake Erie. They hoped to interest the Boston gentlemen who were stockholders in and engaged in extending the Michigan Central to aid in building the Galena. They called upon the Michigan Central Directors, and especially upon Wm. F. Weld, an iron merchant in Boston, who had then the reputation of being "the Railroad King." They were very kindly received and entertained by John B. Forbes, then a director of the Michigan Central, and a wealthy East India merchant, and since long identified with the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Road, and one of its principal stockholders.

Mr. Weld said to us: "Gentlemen, I do not remember any enterprise of this kind we Boston people have taken hold of upon statistics. You must go home, raise what money you can, expend it upon your Road, and when it breaks down, as it surely or in all probability will, come and give it to us, and we will take hold of it and complete it, as we are completing the Michigan Central." A resolution was then formed, though not publicly expressed, that the Galena should not break down. We came home, sought and obtained subscriptions to the stock of the Road upon the pledge that the stock should never be endangered until it rose to par, and the holders had an opportunity of selling their shares at that price. This pledge was kept.

An opportunity occurred, as we were commencing the work, of buying the old strap rail which was being removed from the Rochester and Canandaigua Road to be replaced with T iron, together with two little second-hand passenger cars and two like engines, for $150,000, on a credit of five years, if the writer recollects correctly, provided two of the directors would indorse the bonds. This would require each of the thirteen directors to make himself responsible for a little over one-sixth part of that sum as guarantee of the Galena Company. There was one director who said "he never endorsed other people's paper," and declined to do so, though he was subsequently made president and claimed credit for building the Road, with what propriety and how justly, in comparison with the endorsers, let others

judge. All the others made the requisite endorsement, with the understanding that we were to stick together and reëlect the old board until these bonds should be paid.

We went ahead with the Road and had got out West nine or ten miles, across the wet prairie, to the Sand Ridge, where the teams from the country met us, and transferred their loads to the cars, making the Road pay as soon as the first section was completed. We were so encouraged that we thought there ought to be no doubt about raising money to push the work. Mr. Ogden, as president, had boldly made some contracts with McCagg, Reed & Co., and others, for ties and lumber, based upon expectations of raising money in New York or at the East.

A committee, consisting perhaps of Messrs. Ogden and Raymond, went East for that purpose. They returned unsuccessful. A meeting of the directors was called. It looked blue. To go ahead would endanger the stock. To stop entirely would be a fulfilment of the Railroad King's prophecy. Mr. Ogden was embarrassed. He knew that many of the public had no faith in the Railroad, and believed it to be, on his part, an undertaking to aid him in selling his town lots, they saying that he could well afford to lose his stock if it would help him to sell his land. Most of the other directors were fearful. Mr. Raymond was hopeful, and Walker, Collins, and Scammon courageous. The latter said he believed arrangements could be made to defer or extend the contracts, and to bridge over the time till the instalments on the stock that would be paid after the harvest should be realized, when the work on the Road could proceed slowly, yet successfully. Mr. Dyer, who then owned the Lake House, in the North Division, and was very anxious that the work should go on and the Road extended to the Lake, so as to benefit his property, lost faith. The writer called him "a doubting Thomas." He replied, "if Mr. Scammon has so much faith in the Road, I move that a committee of five be appointed, with full power to do anything which they deem expedient in regard to the Road, and that Mr. Scammon be chairman of that committee, and be authorized to appoint his associates." This was agreed to, and a committee, consisting of Mr. Scammon, James H. Collins, Charles Walker,

Thomas Dyer, and Mr. Raymond, appointed to have charge of the subject. This committee gave the writer *carte-blanche.* He immediately applied to George Smith, the only banker in the place who could make such a loan, $20,000 for six months, for to enable him to go on with the Road. Mr. Smith declined, though a director of the Road and desirous of seeing it completed. He was asked why; if he had not the money. He replied, "Yes, but I do not wish to lose it. I have no confidence in the Road." Mr. S. rejoined, "Don't you think I can build the Road to Elgin with the $363,000 stock subscriptions we have of farmers, which are good, and sure to be paid?" He answered, "Yes, but you are not the president of the Road." Mr. Scammon rejoined, "Don't you think Mr. Ogden can?" Mr. Smith said, "He can, but he won't," adding, "Mr. Scammon, I will lend you the money." The writer replied, "Make out your note, and let me have it." He did so, and the money was taken and placed in the treasury of the Company, no other person in the Road, except those connected with the loan, knowing from whence it came, except the treasurer, the late Frank Howe. This, with arrangements that were made for extending contracts, enabled the Road to meet its engagements, and prevented any suspension of work thereon. The Road was pushed and completed to Elgin. It did not cost much money in those days to build a flat railroad on mostly level land. Yet to obtain the small amount necessary required, at that time, more courage and perseverance than is now requisite to build a road across the Continent. The careful economy exercised in the building of this forty miles was nevertheless very conspicuous. We had money enough only to build the track with very few accessories. It was a single straight line—hardly more. Station-houses, sidings, turn-outs, and turning-tables had to be, for the most part, deferred to the future.

An incident occurs to the writer which may be worth recalling. Upon the completion of the Road to Elgin, a general invitation was given for an excursion over the forty miles between Chicago and that place. Among the party was an Irish engineer, who had published, in Dublin, a work on Railroad Engineering, which he

had with him in bright red binding. On alighting from the cars in Chicago, on our return, the writer asked him what he thought of our Road. He replied: "If it is the engineering you're asking about, I don't think anything of it. We would spend more, in the old country, upon the engineering of a single mile, than you have spent upon your entire Road."

In the meantime, rivalries between the west and north sides of the river had sprung up, and some of the North-Side directors became suspicious that Mr. Ogden did not want to extend the Road across the North Branch into the North Division, because his greater interest was on the West-Side. The temporary depot was then there. Some of the directors proposed to the writer to accept the presidency of the Road. Upon this being declined, it was proposed to make him treasurer and financial agent. This was also declined, for the reason that it would too much interfere with professional work, which the writer was unwilling to give up.

Meanwhile, certain officers of the Road had been busy misrepresenting Mr. Ogden's actions and intentions to Mr. Scammon and Mr. Scammon's to Mr. Ogden, until the latter was led to believe that there was a conspiracy to turn him out of the presidency and elect the writer in his stead. A counter movement was therefore undertaken by Mr. Ogden and the few who were in his confidence. This movement was not discovered until a few days before the election. Nine of the directors were very much surprised to learn it, and all of these nine sided with the writer. What combinations had been made, and how many proxies were held by the parties in this movement, were unknown.

We started for Elgin, where the meeting was to be held. Mr. Ogden's party, with Mr. Arnold as their attorney, went in one car, the other Chicago directors in another. On the way out, the writer said to the directors who were in the car with him, that he had been thinking over the matter, and had come to the conclusion that inasmuch as we did not know how strong the other party were, and what they intended ultimately to do, the better way would be to propose to them that the writer would decline a reëlection, upon condition that all the other directors should be reëlected without opposition; and he said he would name, as his

successor, Mr. Knowlton of Freeport. That the other party would be obliged to accept this, or lose Mr. Knowlton's and the other Freeport votes, which would certainly defeat them. That we could not afford to have an open quarrel, which might hurt our credit and embarrass the progress of the Road. The directors with the writer replied, if Mr. Scammon is willing to make this proposition they thought it would succeed, but no one could ask it of him. He replied, that he was more interested in the completion and success of the Road than in any personal question. That he had worked solely in the interest of the Road as a public improvement demanded by the country, and had no selfish axes to grind, and he would make that proposition, and trust to time for his justification. It was made, much to the surprise of the other party, and after some hesitation or consideration, as it "broke their slate," it was accepted. Mr. Ogden was reëlected president; but no sooner was Mr. Scammon out of the directory than all the batteries of the conspirators were turned against Mr. Ogden, and his place was made so uncomfortable that at the end of the year he left the Road.

Immediately after the election, the nine directors called the conspirators to account; and there was a confession that the writer had been grossly misrepresented and improperly treated, and a promise made that a proper explanation should be made. It was never done. But William B. Ogden acted otherwise. When he learned the facts, and that we had both been made the victims of ambitious and designing men, who wished to get rid of the writer, because he had nipped in the bud their first attempt at speculation in the location of the Road, and prevented its repetition, and because they knew that they were watched, and so long as he was in the Board, such movements were likely to be detected and defeated, came directly to the writer, and, on learning what statements these parties had made to the latter relative to Mr. Ogden, at once frankly acknowledged that in his action he had been misled and imposed upon by those he trusted, and that the writer's conduct, to which he had taken so grave exception, that he felt justified in self-defence to enter into combination to defeat his reëlection, was entirely in the path of right

and duty, if the writer believed the representations made to him, as he was bound to do under the circumstances.

The writer does not believe that any sane man in this world can be so translated as to be uninfluenced by the love of self and the world, however much he may be receptive of higher motives. There are three universal loves which all persons have, and without which they would not be human. A regard to one's own interest is as indispensable to rationality and freedom of action as the higher affections. In a good man it is subordinate to the love of the Lord and the neighbor, but it is not wanting. Whoever supposes he is wholly disinterested has slight knowledge of himself. In keeping the commandments there is great reward, and while they should be obeyed as Divine commands, and upon rational grounds, no one, in the writer's opinion, ever would keep them if disobedience did not inevitably bring, sooner or later, its own dire consequences. We often imagine we are entirely disinterested, and we are not conscious for the time that it is not so, but let there be no reward in doing good, how soon would our heavenly affections vanish? All government in church or state is, or should be, for the public good—for all of us—yet when we love our country, and seek to serve it, it is not necessary that we should forget that we are a part of it.

Mr. Ogden was a great, ambitious man; fond of acquiring wealth and power, and of availing himself of all their advantages. He was a public-spirited citizen, a man of large mold, who found delight in public enterprises, especially those which developed that part of the country where he had made his home. But he could not forget that everything which benefited Chicago, or built up the great West, benefited him. Why should he? He was noble and patriotic, kind and charitable, and ever desirous of being just. He never claimed sainthood, or to be above the usual motives that influence respectable and high-minded, conscientious men. We do not claim it for him. We present his picture as a youth—as a man—and exhibit his deeds to posterity. It is a record that will remain so long as historical archives are preserved in the Garden City.